This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

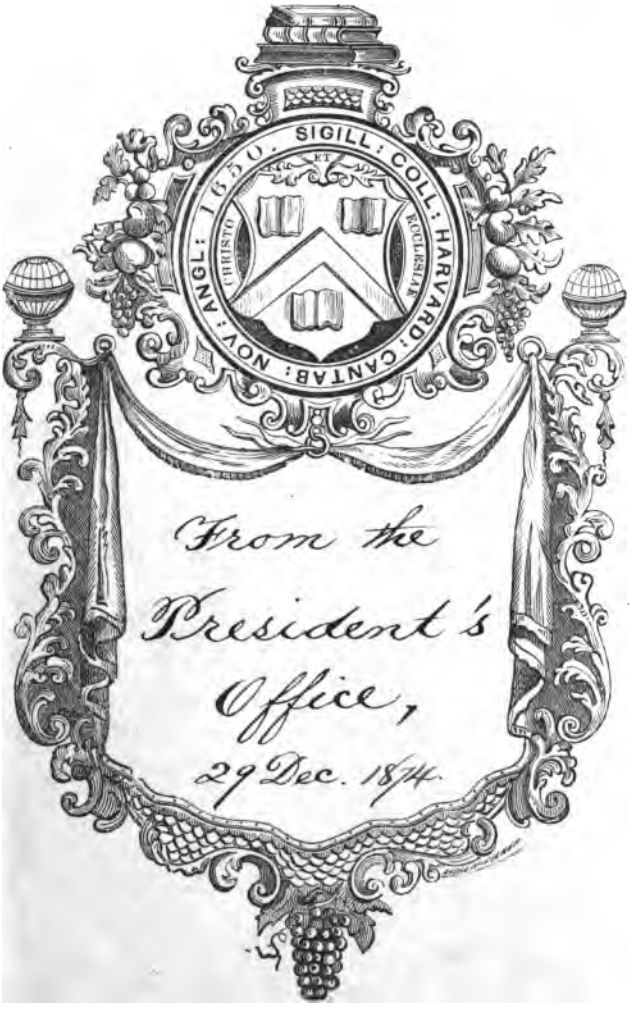
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HD WIDENER
HW K7WR 6

Digitized by Google

C 1218.34.31



Digitized by Google

The Corporation of
Harvard College.
Cambridge
New England

from the Author

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

TWELVE SERMONS

CHIEFLY ON THE

TRUE AND ESSENTIAL HUMANITY

OF THE

LORD JESUS CHRIST

IN RELATION TO HIS MEDIATORIAL WORK, AND THE VARIED EXPERIENCES OF THE TRIED AND EXERCISED CHILDREN OF GOD.

BY

CHARLES GORDELIER.

LONDON:
JOHN GADSBY, GEORGE YARD, BOUVERIE ST. E.C.

1869.

Digitized by Google

C 1218.34.31

19.66

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

1874, Dec. 29.
From the President's
Office.

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

SERMON literature attains its proper place and limit when it becomes a faithful expositor of God's word; or when it is suggestive in its character, leading the mind to a thoughtful study of the sacred page. Something of this has been attempted in the Sermons now presented to the reader's attention. The aim of the author has been to set forth the subjects they refer to in an experimental manner, though, occasionally, some remarks are made in which the subtle and insidious errors of modern Arianism and semi-Arianism are confronted and confuted. He ventures to hope that, under the anointing of the Spirit, the book may be read with profit, savour, and comfort, more especially by that portion of the Church of God whose path is that of tribulation. To them this little volume is dedicated; and is also designed by the Author as a supplement to his former work, "The Truth as it is in Jesus."

LONDON, 49, STEPNEY GREEN,
June, 1869.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

SERMON I.

The Divine Object for which the Tongue of the Learned was given to Jesus Christ.—Isa. l. 4.

SERMON II.

The Reality of our Lord's Human Nature Verified.—Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

SERMON III.

The Grand Consummation of the Mediatorial Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. xv. 24–28.
Appendix on Col. i. 15, &c.

SERMON IV.

The Cherubim of Glory overshadowing the Mercy Seat.—Heb. ix. 5.

SERMON V.

The Resurrection Glories of the Redeemer.—Acts i. 3.
Note on the appearances of Jesus.

SERMON VI.

The Eternal Manhood of Jesus in Heaven.—Heb. vi. 19, 20.

SERMON VII.

The Presence and Sympathy of Jesus with his People in Trials.—Isa. xliii. 2.

SERMON VIII.

The Son of God's Request and Gift of Heavenly Glory on behalf of the Church.—Jno. xvii. 24.

SERMON IX.

The Sufferings of Christ and the Glory that followed.—Luke xxiv. 26.

SERMON X.

The Son of God King of kings and Lord of lords.—Rev. xix. 16.

SERMON XI.

Christ is All, and in all.—Col. iii. 11.

SERMON XII.

The Good Will of Christ towards his Church.—Deut. xxxiii. 16.

Digitized by Google

THE DIVINE OBJECT

FOR WHICH THE

TONGUE OF THE LEARNED

WAS

GIVEN TO THE SON OF GOD.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AUTHOR'S MINISTRY AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Morning, April 14th, 1867.

"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."—ISA. l. 4.

I AM accustomed on these periodical occasions to bring before your attention more definitely topics intimately connected with the doctrine of the Divine and eternal Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ—a doctrine most dearly cherished by me, and one which I hold as primary and fundamental in all that relates to the covenant of grace, the preaching of the gospel, and the experimental enjoyment of the truth as it is in Jesus. I have stood before you as your minister now full four years, and I think I can appeal to you that I have ever aimed to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. His Person as the eternal Son of God, and his Mediatorial work, have always been my main themes; and, so far as I have been experimentally taught, these themes have been commended to your hearts and consciences in that way and manner, so far as simplicity and sincerity are concerned, which I could desire for myself had I been permitted to occupy the position you hold as hearers of the gospel.

The text to which my mind is directed has special reference to the mediatorial character and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. His qualification in having the tongue of the learned divinely given to him relates to his

Digitized by Google

manhood only; for being God, he needed not to be instructed, for he knew what was in man, and he is essentially in himself the fountain of all knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. It must ever be considered, "great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh." The complex Person of Jesus the Son of God is a subject too profound for mortals to explain. Occasionally, we have glimpses of the humanity, but it is a *perfect* humanity, seen only in him; at other times, we see the mighty God. Here, in our text, we have a most beautiful description of his mediatorial capacity, and *why* he was fitted for the peculiar work to which he was called of God the Father. It is the testimony of Jesus, and the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy; and let it be remarked, this prophecy is not of what shall be hereafter, but of that which already is done; it is the language of Jesus Christ, "who is, and wast, and art to come, the Alpha and the Omega;" "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

The subject before us is great and comprehensive, and in order that our minds may the easier apprehend the truth as it is in Jesus, I shall endeavour to observe the following method, by considering, in the

FIRST place, *the Person of Jesus Christ the Son of God in his mediatorial capacity.*

SECONDLY, make some inquiry as to *what is to be understood by our Lord having the tongue of the learned* GIVEN *to him.*

THIRDLY, notice *the school in which our Lord was instructed and became learned;*

And, FOURTHLY, *the great object designed in the Father giving Jesus the tongue of the learned.*

I confess, I feel unequal to undertake what lies before me; but I earnestly pray that the Spirit of truth may take of the things of Christ, and reveal them unto us. May he shine into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. May the Lord be pleased thus to give us his help and blessing, and then to his name shall be all the praise.

I. We are to consider THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD IN HIS MEDIATORIAL CAPACITY.

The apostle Paul speaks of Christ as the unspeakable

Digitized by Google

gift of God the Father to the Church. The love of God in the redemption of the Church by Christ Jesus is most gloriously displayed in the great fact that when sin entered the world, and death by sin, "God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John iv. 9, 10.) He spared not his only Son, but freely gave him up for us all. The work of salvation was ordained in the hands of a mediator—one who could be equally interested in both parties, the offended and the offender; one with whose work divine justice should be fully satisfied, both by meeting the claims of God's most holy law, and also suffering the penalty of its having been violated and dishonoured. All this has been revealed to us in the gospel as having been accomplished by the eternal Son of God undertaking to become our Mediator; first, by becoming our Surety in covenant engagement with his Father; secondly, by becoming incarnate, and thus in our nature, by *the sacrifice* of himself, thereby effecting a reconciliation. This mediatorial work could only be undertaken by the Son of God himself. No archangel, or any other creature, could make an atonement for the sin of man. If all the heavenly host had combined to offer themselves for human redemption, it would have been contemned; and if all mankind had perished in their sin, that is, died eternally for it, it would have been no sacrifice, no atonement, no reconciliation; for punishment, though it may satisfy law and justice, cannot, abstractedly considered, *reconcile* the offended with the offender; but a *sacrifice* made on behalf of the offender by one interested in the honour of the offended, and on equal terms with him, would not only prove acceptable, but effect also a reconciliation with the offended and the offender. Now this is what the Scriptures set forth as having been done by the mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of the whole Church of God." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "In the day thou eatest thereof, in dying, thou shalt die;" this was God's all wise and just decree. The nature that sinned must pay the penalty of sin; for the creature is subject to the Creator, and being under the law, is under the curse of that law. We read in prophecy: "And Jehovah saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." (Isa. lix.

Digitized by Google

16.) And again we read: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then it is we hear the voice of the Son of God, "Then said I, here am I; send me." "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Isa. vi. 8; Ps. xl. 7, 8.) Now, no other Person but "the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father," could receive the Father's commission, and undertake and finish the work given him to do. None but the Son of God could take human nature into union with his own Person, and in that nature accomplish both his Father's will and our redemption; none but the Son of God could offer himself an acceptable sacrifice to his Father. Hence, he became the Christ of God, being divinely commissioned, and is, therefore, *the* divinely anointed *one*. Hear the Father saying, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him," &c. (Isa. xlii. 1.) Hear the Son also saying: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," &c. (Isa. xli. 1-3.)

These quotations from the prophet Isaiah show the *official* appellatives of Jesus the Mediator, every one of which were needed by the fallen and sinful condition into which the Church of God had been brought by the disobedience of the first man. These offices are all united in the Person of the Son of God. As the Mediator of the new covenant, he has the authority to fill, administer, and execute the functions of his office between God and man, because he is *the* Son of God; and, because he is *the* Son of God, the only Son, his own proper Son, such a Son as he has never another, he therefore is *the* mediator of the new covenant, the only Mediator, the Lord's Christ, the Christ of God, the only Saviour. Thus we see, that as he is called officially, not *a* Christ, not *a* mediator, but *the* Christ, *the* Mediator, so we also perceive that, relatively to the Father, he is called *the* Son; setting forth to us the peculiar and unequalled designations that belong only to Jesus of Nazareth, born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem. It is true his designation "the Son of God" was affirmed at his incarnation; not because his incarnation made him

Digitized by Google

the Son of God, that is impossible, to assert it is absurd and altogether erroneous; indeed, that is the Arian heresy with which so many of the professed churches of truth are now infected. Jesus was the Son of God before he became the Son of Mary. He was *the Son given* before he was *the child born;* he was the Son of God before he became the Christ of God, the Mediator, or the man Christ Jesus. As I have often told you, his becoming the sent of God, and taking upon himself our nature, did not make him the Son of God; for he was the Son of God eternally with the Father before any of the covenant transactions whereby he became his Father's servant, or came in his Father's name to seek his Father's honour or to do his will. Here we see what it is that makes the Person of Christ so glorious to the church of God. The divinity of his Person shows the greatness of his love, his amazing condescension, and his wonderful humiliation. His personal dignity stamps all his mediatorial work with importance, authority, and sufficiency; it is what he is in himself, as the Son of God, and what he has done as the Mediator between God and man, that constitutes the sum and substance of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."

The mediatorial capacity of Jesus Christ is the most stupendous act of Jehovah; it outshines all creation. His offices, and the characters he sustains to the church of God on earth and in heaven, are beyond all human description. There is no condition, want, or circumstance in which the weary-worn child of God can be placed; but there is in Christ such a divine fulness of grace as to meet them all, and for ages eternally, because he is the Son of God. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Not only so, the Church of God is "blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as they are chosen in him, before the foundation of the world." His godhead is the divine storehouse and treasury of everything the church can require either before time, in time, or through eternity. Whatever Christ is in himself, personally, as the Son of God, he is all that to the church of God; he gave himself for it, having loved it and cherished it as the bride of his affections from everlasting. So in like manner, whatever Christ is in himself as the Mediator of the new covenant,

Digitized by Google

all the fulness of blessings he possesses, he possesses for the good of his church, to whom he is ever united as her covenant head.

Again, his union with the human nature is the most mysterious that can be conceived. It cannot be explained. Angels desire to look into it. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Phil. ii. 6, 7.) The *reason* why he took our nature is declared: "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (Heb. ii. 14, 16.) It was necessary that our Lord should take our nature into personal union with himself, without which, he could not have accomplished his mediatorship. Thus it is added, "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (v. 17.) The office of the high priest being purely of a mediatorial character, the priesthood and the sacrifice set forth the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man Mediator, in obtaining "eternal redemption for us."

Another great fact in Christ's personal union with our nature is, that it brings us who are regenerated by the Holy Ghost into nearness, union, and fellowship, with Jehovah in his trinity of persons. God out of Christ would be a consuming fire to us; we dare not approach abstract Deity; we are repelled by the very thought. *Incarnate Deity* we can approach. Here is the great difference, God is perfectly pure, perfectly holy, perfectly wise, and perfectly loving; but then that thought of God does not inspire the tenderness, the confidence, the love, that the thought of Christ does, just because there is in Christ a perfect manhood as well as a perfect Godhead. He has a manhood that was subjected to all our human experiences, and by which it was matured into its perfection. The simple innocency of his childhood *grew* in wisdom and in grace; "he grew into mellowed sanctity and sympathy of manhood that was perfected through

Digitized by Google

sufferings by a course of years which his human nature necessarily imposed upon him, and the humiliating condition he took necessarily subjected him." Thus, by his nature as man, he has full sympathy with us in all our experiences of sorrow, temptations, and discipline; for, says the apostle Paul, "he learned obedience by the things which he suffered." (Heb. v. 8.)

II. Let us now proceed in the *second* place, to notice, WHAT IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD BY OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST HAVING THE TONGUE OF THE LEARNED GIVEN TO HIM.

This we have just hinted at in the quotation from Heb. v. 8: "Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." What Jesus had to learn was as the Son of man, not as the Son of God; for as the Son of God, he is the fountain of all knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, but as to his human acquaintance and experience of those sorrows known only to man as the result and effect of sin; the things which Jesus had to learn have no reference to the eloquence or elegance of mere language with which he was to express his thoughts or his feelings to our minds. Verbal learning is not what is here meant, but that kind of learning which human knowledge and experience alone can give; and, because the Lord God sent his Son into our world that he might become incarnate, it is therefore said that he gave him the tongue of the learned. It was necessary, though he was the Son of God, that his human life should be subjected to the varied experiences, sorrows, temptations, privations, and the discipline of our own; and thus it was that he became "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." It is not enough to say that the humanity of Christ was pure and sinless; we must say further, that it was matured and perfected in the knowledge of suffering as ours is. Had it not been so, his sympathy, so far as his human nature is concerned, would have been imperfect and incomplete, because it was not derived from human acquaintance and experience; not but what *as God, he divinely knows* all our sorrows, and is fully acquainted with all our thoughts, and feelings, and desires." "He that formed the eye shall he not see, he that formed the ear shall he not hear, and he that giveth man knowledge shall not he know?" but *as man*, his sympathy is perfect, that is, it is human, and perfect of its kind, he has a fellow feeling with us, not partially, but perfectly,

Digitized by Google

fully and accurate. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 18.) Thus it was that Jesus derived his ability "to succour those that are tempted from having been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," so he became, in his humanity, *learned* in the woes of humanity; he became *perfectly* learned, for his nature was without sin, and, therefore, he had a more acute and intelligent perception of the nature of our griefs, he was made "quick of understanding;" from the fact of his human nature being sinless, he was more sensitive to bodily pain and mental grief. Our nature being sinful, our faculties of thought and feeling are, in consequence, imperfect, blunted, and obtuse; but his nature being perfect, his sufferings were therefore keener, his sense of bodily pain was the more acute and intense than ours, while to everything that was wrong he was the more sensitive than any of us could possibly be. His experience of sorrow was infinitely deeper than ours: "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger" (Lam. i. 12); "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." (Isa. liii. 10.) Having taken our nature in order to take our sin, he became "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." (Isa. liii. 3, 4.). Therefore it is that we say, Jesus had the tongue of the learned bestowed upon him in the greatest possible degree; for who can be so well qualified to sympathise with human sufferings as he, who by reason of a superlative knowledge and a more sensitive experience, is able to discourse and say the proper word in its fitting place at the proper time as our Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate God? Laban said, "I have learned by experience." The man Christ Jesus could indeed say so in its fullest and deepest sense, for he has the tongue of the learned. It is no way derogatory to his character as Mediator, or to his Person as the Son of God, that he should become a learner; no, indeed, it more exalts him in the eyes of his own people, for it displays most resplendently his infinite condescension and grace to take our low estate in order to prepare and raise us to his heavenly inheritance prepared for us before the foundation of the world.

Digitized by Google

But our text says, "the tongue of the learned *was given him*. "The Lord God hath *given* me the tongue of the learned." God the Father set apart his beloved and only begotten Son for the work of the mediatorship; he was the Christ of God, the anointed of the Father: "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me;" "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to *preach* good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted," &c. (Isa. lxi. 1–3) Here then we see his commission and authority; here is the Father's love in sending his own Son, here is the anointing of the Spirit upon him in all the plenitude of his grace, and also he is himself endowed with all the knowledge and ability that can be possibly required for the help and comfort of a poor fallen sinner in this world of suffering. We are, therefore, to understand, that it was in the dispensation of mercy to man by the covenant of grace between the persons of the triune Jehovah, that Jesus, in undertaking the mediatorial office, should become perfectly and completely qualified by his own personal experience with the knowledge of every degree of human suffering and grief in the veritable human nature which he took into personal union with himself.

Brethren, I feel I can make but a very faint and imperfect outline of what is to be understood by Jesus Christ having the tongue of the learned *given* to him by the Lord God. It is one of those deep things of God which the human mind cannot sound or fathom; "It is high, I cannot attain unto it;" I have tried to grasp it, I try to apprehend it, though I know I cannot comprehend it; but I do feel this—how unspeakably great and astonishing must be the love of God in sending forth his Son in the likeness of human flesh to redeem his Church from that gall of bitterness and that bond of iniquity into which she had sunk; for not only did the great and eternal Jehovah know the full extent of the ruin and degradation into which sin had brought mankind, and had made a full and glorious provision for the recovery of those who were ordained to eternal life, but we see he has also provided that every member of his living family, whilst in this world of sin and sorrow, shall have a flow of perfect human sympathy and comfort through the divine channel of Christ's mediatorship, the personal experience of Jesus of that state of humiliation into which his incarnation ne-

Digitized by Google

cessarily involved him. He calls it a *gift*, a divine gift, the Father's gift; for it was the Father's will that he should experimentally know the sorrows and grief to which his people should be subject through sin, and thus be capacitated to sympathise with them in every state, condition, and circumstance into which they may be brought. Well may we say with the apostle, "Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

III. We now proceed to notice, in the *third* place, THE SCHOOL IN WHICH THE LORD JESUS BECAME INSTRUCTED AND LEARNED.

Here our materials are more ample than our time will allow us to enter fully into. It was the school of suffering affliction into which our Lord had to enter in order to become a learner; it behoved him to suffer that he might become learned in human suffering and affliction, temptation, and sorrow. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." (Heb. v. 8.) Though he was the Son of God, he was not exempted from either learning obedience, or from enduring sufferings, as the Son of man. The book of Psalms alone, prophetically, contain a complete compendium of the sorrows and sufferings which pierced the holy soul of Jesus. The deeper shades of agony and grief are to be found more in that precious book, than even in the gospel narrative of those contradictions of sinners which he endured against himself; indeed, I might say, the Gospels are but the records of *the outer life* of our Lord, whilst, in the book of Psalms, and occasionally in the prophets, under the leadings and teachings of the Spirit, we have revealed to us *the inner life*, the heart breathings, the pouring out of the soul, the poutraying of the sorrows which he endured; thus it is, that the book of Psalms, under divine anointing, contains such full cups of blessed sympathy and comfort for the tried believer whilst in affliction and sorrow, for they are constantly filled from the flowings of Christ's loving heart. "You know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, yet he, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty might be made rich." He was humbled in his incarnation and in all the circumstances of his birth, childhood and boyhood. He was humbled in all the circumstances of his public life and

Digitized by Google

death. He suffered in his entire humanity—in his whole spirit, soul, and body. He suffered in his body from poverty, cold, hunger, labour, fatigue, infirmity, and violence. He suffered in his soul from the revilings and reproaches of men, from the contradiction of sinners against himself; he suffered from temptations, persecutions, perils, the desertion of his friends, and from excessive sorrow; from conflict with the powers of darkness both in the wilderness and the garden of Gethsemane; he suffered from the hidings of his Father's face in the time which he said was the hour of his enemies, and of the power of darkness. How grievous, how great was his humiliation! He was taken from prison and from judgment. "In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation." What deadly sorrow seized his holy soul; what fear, what consternation and amazement, what agony! He looked for help from his selected companions in the hour of trial, but he found none; they saw something of his sorrow, but the sight of it drowned them in sleep; the sufferings of his soul were the soul of his sufferings. 'Tis true, the *nature* of his soul's sufferings were peculiar to himself alone; he bore in his own consciousness the burden and weight of all the sins of all his elect people; and not only so, he also bore the curse of the Law, his soul was in our soul's stead. "The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all." He bore the sense of his Father's indignation against sin, for he then stood as the representative of sinners; he was made to be sin, and in his person sin was punished. He bore away the mighty load, and delivered his people from the curse. He died that they might live. His sufferings were substitutionary; his person was representative. "Behold," says the prophet, "and see, if any sorrow be like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."

It may, however, be desirable to point out more particularly the form of suffering which our Lord passed through, in order that he might acquire the experience of suffering humanity in this lower world of sin and woe. What a school was this for the divine Father to place his divine and only Son! There were lessons for him to learn in his human nature for every day of his life on earth, for so I understand the latter portion of our text, "he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear

Digitized by Google

as the learned." *Every day* of his life was a life of trial, suffering, and obedience; no respite, no relaxation, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and he, as "the captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering." Now, in drawing your attention to the particular circumstances of our Lord's sufferings, we can only present but a limited selection; your own knowledge of the gospel history must supply what I may happen to omit. First, we see in the very infancy of our Lord that his holy flesh was made subject to painful suffering by the act of circumcision, for being made of a woman, made under the law, it was requisite that the law should be fulfilled in his own person on his entrance into earthly life. Then we see how he was persecuted and carried out of the country through the fear of Herod's jealousy and cruelty, because he was known to be the "born king of the Jews," no other protection was afforded over his human life, apparently, than that of any other child. With regard to his boyhood, divine wisdom has drawn a veil over that period; I believe that none but Jesus himself can know the self-denial that he exercised in not being "about his Father's business," for necessarily, by Jewish law, he was subject to his reputed parents, Mary and Joseph, until he was thirty years of age, and in this respect he pleased not himself; and on the day of his showing unto Israel, he commenced his public life and ministry in going through the rite of John's baptism of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, not for himself personally, but that it became him to fulfil all righteousness. Immediately upon his public baptism, we are told, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he passed six weeks, being tempted of the devil, and suffering the pangs of hunger, thus body and soul were tried at one and the same time. Throughout his public ministrations "consider how he endured the contradictions of sinners against himself," "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not." The world hated him because he was truth; his enemies never ceased their plotting and contrivances for ridding themselves of his teaching and presence, until they had by the foulest means accomplished their diabolical purpose, though "he went about doing good." If, again, we observe the records of his being weary in body, we are at once struck with the perfection of his manhood, for in order to "know

Digitized by Google

how to speak a word in season to him that is weary," he suffered and endured weariness too, weariness of body and weariness of spirit; he was weary in walking (John iv. 6), he was weary from long preaching, for he fell in a deep sleep in a ship during a storm; his disciples in their distress, at the peril in which he and themselves were placed, sternly demanded of him whether he had any care for them; he might have chided them, he might have rebuked them, but no, neither; he rebuked the wind, and immediately there was a calm. The God shone gracious through the man and delivered them from all their fears.

Look, too, at the numerous and various instances of his praying. Here, emphatically, the tongue of the learned was given to Jesus Christ. "Who in the days of his flesh offered up prayer and supplication with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that which he feared." Of all the acts of Christ's manhood his praying unto his Father is most mysterious and unexplainable. Unquestionably, in every instance, they were his own personal acts; he has entered into the mysteries of the believer's varied experiences, his hopes, fears, dread of the future, distress of mind and agony of soul; he truly sighed, he groaned in spirit, he felt his personal human necessities so as to feel the need of seeking the aid of his Father in heaven. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." Our griefs he felt, our afflictions he bore; he presented at his Father's throne when on earth the petitions and complaints of his people, as well as his own.

We might also point to other features of the human life of our Lord, which would strongly mark the school and schooling he went through for our redemption from sin, and for our comfort in tribulation. His being meek and lowly of heart was a pattern for those who were to learn of him and to find rest for their souls; where he found rest, there must we find rest—in God; our souls can only find rest in him, because he only is our rest; he is God-man. He became weary in his flesh, and by it he became learned in the weariness which his people expeperience—corporeal weariness, mental weariness, soul weariness, circumstantially and spiritually. Throughout his natural life he suffered the privations, hardships, and

Digitized by Google

inconveniences of poverty; for he had no home, no source of income, his bodily necessities were provided for him by the generosity of others; true, it was not for long, but long enough for him to know what it was: this humbleness of mind and poverty of spirit which Jesus exhibited in his temper and manner of life was derived from the school of discipline through which he passed; he sat on the lowest form. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; he suffered in obedience to his Father's righteous will; he complied with every law and ordinance demanded of him, both by God and man; he rendered tribute to whom tribute was due, and custom to whom custom. Such is the brief and imperfect sketch of the school in which the captain of our salvation was made perfect and learned obedience; he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 8.)

IV. I now hasten to observe, in the last place, THE GREAT OBJECT CONTEMPLATED IN THE LORD GOD GIVING JESUS THE TONGUE OF THE LEARNED, viz., "that he might know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary."

This is the object contemplated, and in looking at it we are struck at the fact of its being the most wonderful act of commiseration and unbounded benevolence that Jehovah could possibly exercise towards his creature man: this will lead us to inquire, 1. What is the state and condition of him that is weary? 2. What is the word in season to be spoken? 3. The ability with which it is done.

1. *What is the state or condition of him that is here said to be weary?* It is the soul who is weary of self, weary of sin, weary of Satan, and weary of the world. The soul who is made to feel weary of himself feels the body of sin and death to be a daily burden, and constraining him often to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." I thank God, says the apostle, "through Jesus Christ." He knows how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; how often has he said to the sin-burdened soul, sick of self, sick of sin, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" a word like this spoken to the heart helps the believer along the rugged and uphill road. O what a weary life has a life of self been, spending its labour for that which is not bread, and its strength for that which satisfieth not. What exhaustion follows the

Digitized by Google

doing of one's own way, finding one's own pleasure, and speaking one's own words; what a weariness it is to find no satisfaction in selfish aims and selfish doings; to find continual disappointments until one is weary of self altogether! Now, it is the work of the Holy Ghost to point out the fruitlessness of sin and self, it is not until the exceeding sinfulness of sin is felt, and so becomes a hateful thing, that the soul is weary and longs to be eased of its burden; then to hear the blessed voice, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He gives rest to the weary soul by speaking a word in season, a good word, one that maketh the heart glad; he gives rest to the weary by showing he has taken away our sin, borne our sicknesses, and carried all our sorrows; he gives rest to the weary by showing that the Father has accepted Christ for a ransom, and that for his sake all his sins are forgiven, and for ever blotted out.

The believer in Jesus becomes weary because of the daily conflict within; the flesh lusteth against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh, so that he cannot do the things that he would; he is weary in the struggle and weary of it; again and again he is made to exclaim, O wretched man that I am! and though he knows he shall not be finally overcome, yet he pants for deliverance, he sighs for help, his groanings are often deep and unutterable, and if it were not for the inward aids of the Holy Spirit he would, indeed, be overcome; indeed, sometimes the poor soul has very grave doubts whether there is any real work begun at all; sin prevails, is so strong, never ceases the strife, and grace apparently so weak, that there seems, at times, a moral certainty of falling some day by the hands of this Saul, although, like David, anointed to the kingdom. But so it is, though it is poor comfort for me to tell thee, poor soul, that this conflict will never cease; but then thou shall have strength for thy day, for the eternal God is thy refuge, and he knows how to speak a word in season to him that is weary in the conflict.

The believer, too, is of often weary with many apparently unanswered prayers, with many disappointing providences, with long bodily afflictions, weary with his own cryings, "Lord, how long!" Sometimes the Lord suffers oppression to be long continued—long seasons of darkness, until, with Job, the tried one says, "My soul is weary of my life;" sometimes the believer seems to get weary with

Digitized by Google

long seeking to grow in grace, sees no progress in the divine life, but apparently gets weaker and weaker—the work of grace seems to decline and bids fair to die out, but the Lord knows how to speak a word in season to such weary souls; he will come and save his people from all their fears; he will help them and deliver them; "he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax."

The poor backslider, made to feel that he has erred and strayed like a lost sheep, feels weary with his own ways, he is made to hate himself and to say, What have I to do any more with idols; he has had enough of the world, until he has become sick of it; he has had enough of himself, until he has become sick of himself; weary and worn, when once more he looks again to the holy temple, and finds the Lord has a word in season for him, and restores him to the joy of his salvation.

There are also those who all their lifetime are subject to bondage, through fear of death. Jesus has a word in season for such; he will comfort those standing on the verge of the mystic river, the waters shall be cut off, and they shall pass over dryshod.

2. *The word in season to be spoken.* Solomon says (Prov. xv. xxiii.), "A word spoken in due season, how good is it," and (xxv. 11), "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." "How forcible are right words." (Job vi. 25). "Heaviness in the heart maketh it stoop, but a good word maketh it glad." (Prov. xii. 25).

Here we see the value of a word in season—a word in season is when it is wanted; a proper word at the right time properly spoken. As when a man is cast down, it is proper that he should be cheered by a cheering word; a mourner should be comforted and sympathised with; if one is in despair of God's mercy, a word of hope is needed; if one is in darkness, a suitable word is felt desirable; if one is thrust down, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand—a word will do it: times of sorrow and grief require suitable words to soothe and to alleviate—times of rejoicing and gladness have their fitting and appropriate words for responding. Words of kindness, O how cheering to the mourning, sad, desponding heart! words of kindness to the weary, to the forlorn, the oppressed, the forsaken, the poor, how good, when spoken in a kindly manner! These are words in season, and Jesus knows how

Digitized by Google

to speak a kind word in season to him that is weary and way-worn in the path of tribulation; he speaks to the heart, he speaks to the purpose, for his word is with power, and when he speaks peace, who shall bring trouble? Our friends may try to comfort us, they often fail; they miss their mark, they don't know how to speak a word in season; their will may be good, but they are lacking in the power which Jesus alone possesses. He only "knows how to speak a word in season to him that is weary;" he only knows how and when to apply his own promises to the tried believer's heart. Poor Job's friends, what miserable comforters they were! they saw that his grief was very great, so great that they could not say one word of pity or sympathy; they did not know how to speak a word in season. They themselves were overcome with grief; they could feel pity, no doubt, but could apply no relief. Not so our Jesus, for whatever may be the measure of our affliction or misery, he knows how to abound in consolations towards us, and this leads me to notice

3. *The ability with which it is done.* "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, implying that he has the wisdom and the power. (2 Peter ii. 9.) What a precious portion of God's word is this, "The Lord knows how!" Many times have I felt its preciousness, its sweetness, and its power. "The Lord knows how;" my soul has hung on that word in the windy storm and tempest, it has been like an anchor, sure and stedfast. "The Lord knows how," by his own personal experience; it was in the school of temptation that he became so distinguished a learner; it was in the school of suffering that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Never was there so perfect and ripe a scholar —perfect through sufferings; having been tempted, he is able to succour those that are tempted. He knows how to speak a word in season to all such. He does it with an almighty power, with an irresistible power, with a sure and certain power, with an effectual power. He speaks to the heart, he knows the case perfectly and how to treat it. He has a divine knowledge, a fulness of knowledge, as well as a comprehensive understanding derived from his own human experience; he therefore knows *what* is best to say, *when* it is best to say it, and *how* to apply it, for he is infinite in wisdom, as well as in power and knowledge, and his infinite love and sympathy will prompt him to

Digitized by Google

speak a word in season to all wounded, afflicted, mourning, weary souls. He knows how to speak pardon to the guilty and returning penitent; he knows how to speak peace to the troubled heart; he knows how to speak comfort to all that mourn, for the Spirit of the Lord God is upon him, because the Lord hath anointed him to *preach* good tidings to the meek;" "he hath sent me (saith Jesus) to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." (Isa. lxi. 1-3.)

All power is given to our Lord Jesus Christ, both in heaven and in earth; hence he gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increases strength. The words he speaks are spirit and they are life; he speaks with power, for where the word of a king is, there is power. Never man spake like the Lord Jesus, for his word was with power. When his voice was heard on this earth, the people wondered at the gracious words that proceeded from his lips: the same voice is still heard on earth; though he is in heaven, it is heard in the remotest recesess of the conscience; some of you, I doubt not, have often said or sung, "No voice but thine can give me rest, or satisfy my heart." The words of Jesus will raise the dead—it was the words of Jesus that raised me from a death of sin. "Search the Scriptures, search the Scriptures," sounded in my ears for many days until my stout rebellious heart was broken, and I became an humble suppliant for his mercy and grace. The words of Jesus will hush the tempest, I have proved it again and again—poor tempest-tossed soul, it is only for him to say to the winds and waves, "Peace, be still," and immediately there shall be a calm. The prince of the air must obey his voice; his word will cast out devils, it will confute the disputing sophist, it will condemn the wicked, but it will save the righteous. When we are in any trouble, our own dear friends, as we have just said of Job's, often prove wanting in ability, for they don't know how to speak a word in season; they try to do so, they think they know how, but

Digitized by Google

their knowledge is so imperfect, and their capacity is so small, that they fail, miserably fail, unless the Lord condescends to own their effort and conveys the comfort which they desire to impart. O! this should lead us to look to Christ alone, and say, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him; from him cometh my salvation."

They who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. He strengthens them by communicating the supply of his Spirit. "In the day of my trouble, I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and he *answered* me; he strengthened me with strength in my soul." The words of the Lord Jesus are divine words, founded in his human experience, but spoken with almighty power, with divine wisdom, in divine love; hence his sympathy is perfect, and being applied with a divine power, secures the end designed. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The soul finds rest in Christ, is stayed upon him, and has peace; for "if he speaks a promise once, the eternal grace is sure." The words of the Lord are *sure* words, *tried* words, words spoken out of his human heart, from his own experience, his own personal trials; all his sufferings, temptations, privations, scornings, buffetings, cruel mockings, or whatever has been inflicted by men, devils, sin, or from the hidings of his Father's face in the great day of his fierce anger, have qualified him for speaking a word in season to him that is weary. Oh ye weary, worn-out sinners, who are now passing through the same school of affliction, though in a lower degree, you are the objects of his pity, love, and grace; it is to you he has a word in season; to the broken-hearted sinner he applies the balm of Gilead, his own precious blood, and binds up their wounds; in every case it shall be found "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to men; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it; "For in that he himself hath suffered, he is able to succour them that are tempted;" "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."

Brethren, tried believers, what think ye of Christ? Is

Digitized by Google

he not a most glorious and precious Christ? Have you not found him to have the tongue of the learned, and to have spoken a word in season to you? I am sure he has to me, and I must declare it to the honour of his name. He speaks salvation to the sinner, feeling his lost, ruined, undone condition in himself; he says to such a soul, "I am thy salvation." Seeking sinner, is this the word you are longing to hear? or, are you weary with seeking rest where it cannot be found? in your own methods, your fancied meetness, your own self-righteousness, your own performances, vows, and resolutions? Now, if you are weary in such works of the flesh, and are desiring to look to Christ alone to speak a word in season, know then of a surety, he will do it; ere long you shall find rest for your soul; he is faithful that has promised, and he will do it; he knows *how;* he has all the ability that your case can possibly require. He spoke a word in season to the man sick of the palsy: "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are all forgiven thee." He spoke a word in season to the trembling woman who came behind him, "Daughter, go in peace, thy faith hath made thee whole." He spoke a word in season to the leper who came to him for healing; he came believing in his ability, but not assured of his willingness—"I will, be thou clean." Perhaps some of you have no doubt of his ability, but fear his willingness towards you, To such he says, "Be not afraid, only believe." Perhaps you respond, "Lord, I would believe, help my unbelief?" Now, do you keep there; do not move from that spot; the Lord will speak a word in season, never fear. Perhaps some of you are in circumstantial troubles, deep waters, the fiery furnace. Well, the dear Lord has a word in season for you; he will not be unmindful of his covenant; he has the control of all the elements of nature and the circumstances of life, and, remember too, the hearts of all men are in his hand; he will not only speak a good word, but it shall be spoken at the time that it is most wanted; see that you are waiting upon God; trust his wisdom, trust his love, trust his power; his covenant stands engaged to help you, and to bring you through; your past experience has proved that if you have heard his voice in a time of trouble, it has done you good, and it has proved a word in season indeed. It is the will of God the Father that you shall have a word of comfort in your affliction, for he gave

Digitized by Google

his own dear Son the tongue of the learned that he "might know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." Was ever love like this! Amen.

With regard to our Anniversary, which for the fourth time we now observe, I wish we could give some pleasing account. So far as the attendance of hearers is concerned, as you may see, we have but little to encourage us; and, as for spiritual fruit, that testimony which God gives to the word of his grace, which is what I can only be contented with, I fear there is still less ground for encouragement; and unless some fruit is borne to my labour in this place, I do not think I shall be justified in remaining; still, we will try a little longer; perhaps the Lord may shine in upon us yet, and send us some prosperity. If so, well; we shall soon forget our long night of toil.

Next Friday, known as Good Friday, morning and evening, Mr. Dangerfield, of Devizes, has kindly promised to preach two sermons. I make no doubt, but that, as usual, some of our friends from Zoar and Gower Street chapels will be present, and cheer us with their countenance and support. Our cash matters trouble us the least; what we want is the Lord's help and blessing upon us as a church and congregation. If we have this, the pecuniary supplies will be quite a secondary consideration. Friends, pray for us, and when you leave, kindly leave a testimony of your sympathy with us by contributing to the collection. Amen.

N.B.—The substance of this sermon was preached also at Providence Chapel, Chichester, on the following Lord's day evening, April 21st.

Digitized by Google

THE REALITY

OF

OUR LORD'S HUMAN NATURE,

VERIFIED BY THE VARIOUS FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS LIFE ON EARTH.

A SERMON

PREACHED ON BEHALF OF THE AGED PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY, AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Morning, December 22nd, 1867.

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—PHILIPPIANS II. 6, 7, 8.

My mind has of late been much occupied in dwelling upon the reality of the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ—namely, that he possessed a true human soul, with all its faculties and capabilities common to mankind; that he possessed human sympathies arising out of his own personal experience with men and the things of men, and that his bodily organisation and powers were the same as with man in common, sin only excepted. It is a subject which, I think, is not sufficiently entered into by the people of God generally; they believe it, I know, but I much question whether they live upon it as they ought to do, especially that portion of the living family whose peculiar lot it is to enter the kingdom through much tribulation.

I am led to take the verses which I have read by way of a text, as the foundation of the remarks that I may make upon this important and interesting subject proposed for your meditation. It is a wonderful scripture, for it gives us a glorious account of the dignity of Christ's

Digitized by Google

person and of his equality with God; and also his humiliation, his sufferings, and his death, are thereby most explicitly declared. May the Lord grant us his help and blessing in considering some of the precious truths contained in this portion of his holy word, and that we may each experimentally "know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." If this be granted, I shall have but little need to urge upon you the necessity of ministering to the external wants of our poor brethren and sisters, through the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society.

But before I proceed to enter upon my subject—the reality of Christ's human nature, I shall notice the first portion of the text, "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Few passages in the New Testament have given rise to more discussion than this. Its importance on the question of the Godhead of Christ as the Son of God will be seen at once. His glory is spoken of substantially and essentially, as his *nature*, his own, underived, equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost. The expression "Form of God," is here used in contrast with "Form of servant" in the next verse, and has no reference to his bodily shape whatever; the meaning is, that what Jesus Christ was in his incarnate state, *truly man*, in like manner he was truly God prior to his incarnation. He was in the form of God, true and very God; so also he was true and very man in the form of a servant, the subordinate condition of a servant was undertaken by him, though in his personality he was the Son of God. The union of the two natures, the human with the divine, is the great mystery of godliness. Possessing a true human soul, as well as a true human body, and knowing in his own personal consciousness that he was God, the Son of God, he therefore, in his complex person, the God-man, *thought* it not robbery to be equal with God: that is, he knew in his own mind, that it was not derogatory to his person as the Son of God, to assert his equality with God the Father; hence he declared that he and his Father were *essentially* ONE, though personally distinct. His taking our nature was for the purpose of becoming our Mediator, which office, though it made him the servant of his Father in the covenant of grace, nevertheless did not alter the relationship

Digitized by Google

in which he stood with the Father, nor detract from the dignity he possessed as the Son of God. The glory of his Person is his nature and essence. The Son of God co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father. Therefore we see that his voluntary humiliation in taking the form of a servant is the more remarkable and condescending. He became the servant of the Father that he might be the Saviour of the Church. The safety and glory of the Church depend mainly upon the capacity and grace of its Redeemer and Covenant Head. What Christ is in himself, and what he is to us, by the appointment of the Father, unite in presenting to our faith a most glorious view of the love of God in so great and unspeakable a gift as his dear Son for our redemption, and in providing so solid a ground for our trust and triumph. "In this was manifest the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John iv. 9.) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

I shall now attempt to consider *a series of facts and circumstances* intimately associated with the life of our Lord Jesus when on earth: this, I think, will illustrate and elucidate our subject better than by taking a few general heads and making subdivisions. My desire is, if possible, to set forth these various facts as so many links, so as to form one chain of argument which will exhibit the doctrine of the reality of our Lord's human nature in a light that may be easily perceived by the plainest seeker and lover of divine truth. My earnest prayer is, that the Holy Ghost may be pleased to take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us, for it is only in his light that we see light: without it, all our preaching is vain and unprofitable.

THE FIRST FACT we have to notice is, *the incarnation of the Son of God.*

"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh." "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." This glorious fact lies at the threshold of the Christian faith. "The incarnation of the Eternal Word made the unseen God visible to mortal eyes, and so enabled mankind to see, as they had never seen before, the glory of God." Now it is easy to see that by *the Word* the beloved dis-

Digitized by Google

ciple means the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the second person in the glorious Trinity; under this name he is frequently spoken of in other parts of his writings, as in 1 Epistle, v. 7: "There are three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost;" and in Rev. xix. 13, he tells us most emphatically, or rather, it is a revelation made to him, his name is called "THE WORD OF GOD." 'Tis true, the more general name which the apostle uses—indeed, I may say, his darling phrase is, the Son of God, for so he was called at his birth, to intimate his divine dignity, and what a mighty Saviour he should be; and here we must remark, his incarnation was not more the cause of his being the Son than it was of his being God. It was a declaration of his title to which he had a divine right long ere the purpose existed for which he became incarnate. The incarnation was a manifestation of his own personality, as well as its being the manifestation of his Father's design to destroy the works of the devil; it was God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 3.) Dr. Guyse, in his sermon on preaching Christ, says, "I take the *Son of God* to be a title originally founded in a necessary eternal generation, which is peculiar to him and altogether above our conception as to the manner of it, but according to which he is, and always was, partaker of the same nature and essential perfections with the Father, personally distinguished from him, and necessarily co-existent with him." The title, therefore, THE SON OF GOD, I regard as the highest title of our Lord Jesus, and the most proper to use *in ordinary*, in order to keep up in our minds right and exalted views of him as God our Saviour; evidently it was his title before his incarnation and apart from the office which he undertook as our Mediator. Right thoughts of *the person* of the Son of God will, under the teachings of his Spirit, keep us from having wrong thoughts of *his work* as our Mediator, for if we be wrong in our views of his personality as the Son of God, we shall be in danger of trusting the matter of our salvation to some imaginary God, or superior creature called God, which the heated imaginations of Arians and semi-Arians have cunningly devised to foster their own pernicious notions, because they hate the light of God's own word and will not come to it. Brethren,

Digitized by Google

be not deceived by men's fancies: men who are taught of God hold the faith of God's elect.

But let us proceed. In taking the nature of man, it is evident Jesus also took a human soul—that is, such a soul as ours; that is, in its natural attributes, peculiar and proper to men, its mental and moral powers, sin, of course, excepted; and, indeed, without a human soul, he would not have been truly a man, though in the form of a man; his human body was not governed by the Deity, as appears from our text, "*He thought* it not robbery to be equal with God;" that is, in his state of manhood, he though it not robbery to be equal with God his Father. Indeed, it is quite absurd to suppose that the Incarnation of the Word was simply a divine soul in a human body, for when Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane, it is said, "and, being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly, saying, Father, not my will but thine be done"—a sentence which at once shows that he was the Son of God, yet possessing a human soul. The two natures, though mysteriously united in his person, were essential for us as our Mediator, Substitute, and Saviour. For if his human nature was not wholly body and soul a true man, then his work as our Redeemer is incomplete, and we have no sure foundation for our hope of salvation. But, observe, there is a positive reality in the Incarnation, as appears from the fact in the *time* of the conception to the birth, all was natural, the ordinary time of human gestation, the phrase *born of a woman* implies so much, and the history as recorded fully proves it, as much as if medical men had technically described it: Jesus was born of Mary the wife of Joseph, in Bethlehem.

Wonderful also are *the circumstances* of the Incarnation. By the ordering of Providence, Joseph and his wife are led to Bethlehem, their own city, the city where David their ancestor was born. In this city Jesus was born, born king of the Jews, for he was the first-born son of Mary, the last of the house and lineage of David. and therefore he is, and ever will be, the rightful heir to David's throne. He came in the form of a servant, the son of a carpenter —that is, so far as the world is concerned. In his human nature he was as much a servant, being the reputed son of a carpenter, as any other tradesman would be, for they are all hired or employed for the service they can render, and are but servants, for the time being, strictly speaking.

Digitized by Google

So, in his divine nature, the Son of God undertook to be the Mediator and Redeemer of his Church, a service which he only, being the Son of God, could undertake. Wondrously in his complex nature, as God and Man, he is his Father's servant and our Mediator. In Bethlehem, in circumstances the most ill-adapted, and miserably inconvenient; in a stable, a mere hovel or shed for cattle, Mary, the Virgin mother, brought forth her *first-born Son*, a phrase that quite settles the question that she had afterwards other children. The holy child Jesus was wrapped in swaddling-clothes, laid in a manger, there being no bed for the poor mother, save only the litter or straw intended for the cattle.

How singular *the signs* that prognosticated his birth; the astronomers are guided by a brilliant star; they trace his place of nursing; they inquire, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" they offer him gifts fit for a king; the shepherds are *divinely* directed by signs easily to be traced by such persons, the only case of the kind in Bethlehem. What a revelation of his divine person was made to these men? They were not so vain in their imaginations as to suppose that, by his birth, he became the Son of God, because it was a title then declared. No, they received the truth in the love of it: "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, *which is Christ the Lord*." He was the Son of God before he became the son of Mary; he was the Son given before he was the child born; he was the only-begotten Son of God before he became the Christ of God, or the man Christ Jesus. Because he was God's only-begotten Son, he was anointed to be the Father's servant in the work of salvation. Being the Lord's anointed, he became incarnate. He became incarnate because he was sent; he was sent because he was the Son of God.

Such was the infantine state of him whose goings forth have been from everlasting. Before all worlds, in the bosom of his Father, he was the Almighty I AM. The incarnation was not the loss or deprivation of the Godhead. No; it was the closest possible linking of the divine and human natures in one person; each nature distinct, yet both for ever united. His weakness and poverty of circumstances were seen in the stable, but his praise as Christ the Lord was sung by angels in the adjoining field. He made himself of no reputation, but

Digitized by Google

took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. The ancient of days became the infant of days; though the worlds were being upheld by the word of his power, yet in his birth he was humanly weak as other infants; he was upheld and carried in the arms of his mother; he was suckled, soothed, caressed, cradled, and cared for as other infants are. Wonderful! wonderful! the incarnation of the Son of God.

"No less Almighty at his birth
Than on his throne supreme;
His shoulders held up heaven and earth
When Mary held up him."

Again. That Jesus had a true human body is evident from its being called a body: "A body hast thou prepared me" (Heb. x. 5); and from the description that is given of it *as flesh and blood* (Heb. ii. 14), the same kind with that which the children redeemed by him are partakers of. And after his resurrection, Jesus spoke of his body as consisting of flesh and bones of the members proper to the human body. (Luke xxiv. 39.)

And that he had a true human soul is also evident; for he, as a child, *increased* in wisdom as well as in stature. His soul was developed by degrees the same as his body. His soul as a man was subject to the same passions and emotions of love, joy, desire, hope, displeasure, grief, and sorrow, as ourselves, only without sin, either in himself as its cause, or in the exercise of such emotions. We read of his rejoicing in spirit, of his being grieved and troubled, of his sighing deeply and groaning in himself, of his being sorrowful even unto death. All these and such like expressions show that he had a true human soul and a true human body. Each was developed in their parts and faculties as his years increased. "He was made in all points like unto his brethren, sin excepted." So then his human soul had no pre-existence to his body, as some most absurdly and blindly say.

THE SECOND FACT. *His Childhood and Boyhood.* We read "It behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren." (Heb. ii. 17.) Of John the Baptist, he is spoken of as being *born of women*—that is, successively so, having a carnal father who was born of his mother; but of Christ it is said, "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son *made of a woman*, made under the law," &c. (Gal. iv. 4.) Here we see an

Digitized by Google

important distinction, and it proves both the *purity* of his human nature and the *reality* of it; for, as the substitute of his Church, he must undergo, when the days of his mother's purification were completed, the rite of circumcision. This rite was the sign of a covenant between God and his people, the Jews; and in the Son of God's submission to it, we have a strong link in the chain of evidence borne to his perfect humanity. He as the Head of his Church represented it. In him his people were circumcised under that law; he underwent presentation to God at the temple, and was ceremoniously redeemed. In infancy he is treated as a sinner; he suffered the infliction of pain, though born sinless; being made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law; he came under the curse, for he was made a curse for us; he was holy while unborn, holy when born, but the law must be fulfilled. His circumcision was not only a national rite, but also a substitutionary act on behalf of the Church of God. But I think I can give this subject considerable more point by quoting an extract from one of Mr. Philpot's early sermons. On a former occasion I approved of it so much that I inserted it as a foot-note in the second edition of my sermon on the "Sonship of Christ." I wish now to incorporate it in this sermon, for I think, as it regards the human pre-exterian doctrine, it is unanswerable.

"The dream of the pre-exterians is utterly and directly contrary to the truth of God; and those that are wrapped up in this delusion found much of their argument on this 8th chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon. I call it a delusion, and a dangerous delusion too, because it strikes at the very root of the atonement. For, if Christ's human soul existed before the foundation of the world, then that human soul of Christ was never under the law; but we read that he was made of a woman, *made under the law*." But if that soul existed before the law was given, there could be no subsequent *ex post facto* operation of the law upon that soul; and if it was never under the law, then Christ never could have wrought out the righteousness demanded by the law; and therefore it strikes a deadly blow at Christ's righteousness and Christ's atonement." *Vide* No. 364 "Penny Pulpit," 6th ed.

To return. The presentation of the infant Saviour was attended by two very remarkable coincidences in the

Digitized by Google

recognition of him as the Lord's Christ, the Simeon blessing God that he had seen the consolation of Israel, the salvation of God; Anna the prophetess, the first preacher of Christ in the temple at Jerusalem, the city of the great king. These two persons thus became important and independent witnesses to the identifying the person of the child born and the son given with the prophesies that had long before been made concerning him. The parents return to Bethlehem to live in privacy, as they had hitherto, but the birth, the presentation, and the attendant circumstances, have become matters of public interest. Herod the king secretly purposes to destroy him, but Joseph is warned, and the helpless babe is taken to Egypt by flight. Apparently his human life was no more protected than other infants. At length, he is brought back; he lives with his parents at Nazareth; he was not educated at any of the national or public schools of learning, but was mysteriously secluded and unnoticed, as other boys of poor working parents usually are. At twelve years of age he drew the attention of the doctors at Jerusalem by asking them questions, an indubitable evidence of the growth and development of the intellectual faculties, and that his soul could not have been in a pre-existent state. Jesus evidently, though but a youth, had his mind engaged in the work which his Father gave him to do; but, according to Jewish law and custom, he remained subject to his reputed parents, returned with them to Nazareth, and remained unknown to the world until he was thirty years of age. What an amazing cross the Saviour had to take up in his youth; what extraordinary self-denial; he knew he must be about his Father's business, for, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy will is within my heart." But no, the public exercise of his work must be retarded for eighteen years. Eighteen years of such close self-denial as must have astonished angels. With heaven and earth at his command, he postpones preaching righteousness in the great congregation, and refrains his lips, until he in his manhood is no longer subject to Joseph and Mary. A veil is divinely drawn over the period between his adolescence and manhood. Of his childhood there is no record, except that he "grew and waxed strong in spirit," as healthy boys of good constitution do; he was "filled with wisdom,

Digitized by Google

and the grace of God was upon him." (Luke ii. 40.) Here is his natural growth in stature, strength of body and mind; beauty of person, well-formed and regular features, with pleasing expression of countenance; he *increased in wisdom*, no undue precocity of intellect that prematurely subsides into inanity of mind, no folly was bound up in his heart, no childishness of manners, no boyish mischievousness, no sinful thoughts ever entered his mind; he had no need of correction; he grew in favour with God. The human growth of Jesus was pleasing to his Father, the more so, because he was the only sinless child that had ever lived upon earth, his boyhood was without sin; he was full of grace and truth; no man had ever beheld such a youth before, or ever will again. He grew in favour with men; the more he was known, the more he was loved. Men saw in him, man in its native pristine purity. Men saw in him what would have been seen universally if man had never sinned. Oh what a lovely world this would have been had sin never entered!

We see, therefore, in the boyhood of Jesus, a loveliness of character that commands our wonder and admiration, especially at the exercise of self-denial in suspending his own will to execute his Father's business. Nevertheless, he asserted his divine Sonship, and claimed its prerogatives. "He learned obedience by the things which he suffered." For even Christ pleased not himself. (Rom. xv. 3.)

THE THIRD FACT. *His Temptation in the Wilderness.* We now approach the entrance of the public life of the dear Redeemer. Every step is full of wonders. The baptism of John was a baptism of repentance, a change in the dispensation, a reformation, a turning from dead works to serve the living God. Yet we see Jesus coming to John for baptism; he needed no repentance, for he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; but he thought it right to pass through that solemn ordinance in order to fulfil all righteousness, and so honoured the rite of immersion as a divine institution. We read, that as he went up straightway out of the water, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him. The bystanders heard a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Here was God's own testimony to the divine Sonship of Christ;

Digitized by Google

the ordinance of believers' baptism honoured by the divine approval, and an example set of humble obedience to all the followers of the Lamb that they should walk in his steps.

Our Lord is now, at his baptism, consecrated, set apart in his human nature, and future life, for the public ministry, for the fulfilment of his Father's business: "It behoved him, in all respects, to be made like unto his brethren," and that he might be fitted and qualified for his work, and be a merciful and faithful priest in things pertaining to God, he must needs be tempted of the devil. He is therefore led by the Spirit, or, as it reads in one place, "immediately the Spirit *driveth* him into the wilderness." Here he endured a fast of forty days, and was among wild beasts. Afterwards, it is said, *he hungered*. Here is a proof of his humanity; his body needed food; here is a reality that cannot be denied, though it is unusual for persons in the present state of things to feel a desire or craving for food after so long an abstinence, for loss of appetite and exhaustion usually supervene. During the whole of this period Jesus was tempted of the evil spirit. Only three of the most prominent assaults are recorded. It was a conflict which had no human witness, and therefore the circumstances must have been related to the disciples on some fitting occasion. We know of one instance when Jesus said, "I beheld Satan, as lightning fall from heaven." The lesson we derive is, we see our Lord's triumph over the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Here is Satan disputing with Christ himself on all points as to his own divine Sonship. Satan himself had no doubt of the fact, but he hurled his fiery darts in order to wound and to distress the holy soul of the Son of God in the extremity of human weakness. His being thus tempted as recorded, clearly proves he was really a man; his victory over the tempter clearly proves the impeccability of his nature, and is an earnest of his final and complete conquest over the devil. The temptation qualified him by actual human experience to pity, sympathise, and help us as fellow-men, with power above man because he is God. The result of this human compassion wrought experimentally in the soul of Christ was a further reason why he submitted to the temptation—to wit, that his Church might have the greatest comfort and encouragement in expecting help at

Digitized by Google

the throne of grace in every time of need. This temptation gives us a signal instance of Satan's subtlety and effrontery, and shows what temptations we are to expect, what weapon to use, and how to use it. If the object of the first two temptations was to discover whether Jesus was the Son of God, and that of the third whether he was the true Christ, as some seem to think, then Satan had a most complete overthrow, and must have been fully convinced that he had nothing in Jesus the Son of God.

We ourselves are hereby taught that there is no sin so gross which Satan will not tempt the best of men to commit; and we have the consolation of knowing that Jesus has an experimental knowledge of the temptations themselves which try his people, for like, as in his own case, there is no human eye to witness the conflict, nor is it in the power of human sympathy to make a way of escape, or to mitigate the suffering; but Jesus can, we know he can, and does sympathise with his tempted brethren in the wilderness, and that he is able to subdue or moderate temptation: "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." We know too, that all power is in his hand, and that he stands engaged to be with his people in all their trials, to give strength according to the day, and also that through him we shall come off more than conquerors.

THE FOURTH FACT. *His Sympathy and Friendship.* This subject is as a Garden of Eden. Every plant and flower is of the choicest kind, not a thorn, not a weed, not a worm; here all the air is pure, serene, for it is love.

The friendship of Jesus Christ with mortals on earth is very remarkable. Of John, it is said, "that disciple whom Jesus loved." Peter and James were intimate friends, yet not bosom friends as John; his other disciples were, as we might say, but companions. The Bethany family had a large share of his love. He loved each of them, that is, with a human preference beyond others. He enjoyed their society, and when at Jerusalem or near their locality, made their house his home. His journeys and his whereabouts were known to this family; for when the brother fell sick, the sisters knew where to send for him, and they knew how to touch his feelings. His divinity and his humanity are here strangely conjoined in that sentence, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." In that word "friend," as he uttered it, Oh, what power!

Digitized by Google

what sweetness! what music! such as the world never knew after sin came into it. It was such friendship as would have been known and felt throughout the world if sin had not entered. The scene at the grave shows how truly he was a loving man. The Jews saw it and remarked it. Jesus yielded to the power of affection and sympathy which struggled for vent. He suffered compassion and sorrow to lay hold of him. He felt the loss of his beloved friend Lazarus. He wept with those who wept; he found relief in tears; it was not unmanly to weep, but it showed that he was a man, and had all the feelings of a man sensitive to those emotions which bereavement and sorrow call forth; but when he spoke out, "Lazarus, come forth," it showed he was God.

There are several other instances which might be noticed under this head, but time forbids. We will, however, just notice his condescension and urbanity in his discourse with Nicodemus, who came at an appointed leisure time to seek truth and to have it explained. Oh, what patience and kindness marked every explanation given, and what choice revelations were made of spiritual things which the learned listener had not heard before; what an unfolding of the rich treasures of Gospel grace to his wondering view. How delightful the thought! the same Jesus, in the same temper and with the same grace, is ever ready to open the minds of any of his followers who feel their lack of wisdom.

His interview with the woman of Samaria: what a tone of human kindness in his communication! how it was underlaid with divine power—unseen, but not unfelt. No severe rebuke for her manner of life. His exposure of it was its own rebuke. He spoke out so manly, brotherly, openly, frankly, freely, candidly, truthfully, and with such persuasiveness, that she was disarmed of prejudice. She called her neighbours, they conversed with him, they liked the stranger Jew. He entered their city, he discoursed with them of the things pertaining to salvation, they received his word, and he was hosted by them, many believing to the salvation of the soul. What encouragement to every class of characters who are led simply to hear the word of Christ without the prejudices of nationality, class feeling, or a previous course of life!

So, with regard to the woman accused of adultery, what kindness of manner towards one who had been dragged

Digitized by Google

about and exposed with needless severity! what wondrous words of grace he spake to her: "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." He would not take the judge's seat, but he advised her for her good. I warrant you, she never did in the sense he meant; for I believe divine grace took possession of her heart, and she became a chaste person, and a humble follower of Jesus.

Again, look at the case of the beggar born blind. Jesus was hasting away to escape being stoned, yet he courageously and dexterously passes through their very midst, for no one would then throw stones amongst each other; but, wonderful to relate, as he passed by, he saw this blind man, he stops, his disciples put a question as to the cause, but Jesus takes in hand *the cure*: the disciples were speculative, but Jesus is practical. Here, in the midst of confusion and excitement, the violent mob at his heels, he is found doing a work of mercy which only a God could do. He heals the blind man with all the calmness of spirit imaginable.

His compassion for the multitude and strangers is well known by the frequent records we have in the New Testament. He "went about doing good." He fed thousands of hungry men and women. He healed the sick and cast out devils. True, he did all this because he was God; but it showed he was also man. He felt for them; he himself had been hungry, he knew the miseries of the diseased, the lunatic, and the demoniac. He healed all who came unto him: his compassionate heart refused no case that came under his observation.

Last, but not least, his care for his agonising mother, her soul being pierced as with a sword, whilst he was suffering on the cross. How thoughtful of her earthly comfort for the future. He makes his will in her favour, and appoints his beloved friend John to be his executor. My friends, we must take hold of these facts in our Lord's history. Jesus is still our friend, and he is with us still through all our journeyings in this wilderness state. He is at all times ready for our help and for our supply. These things are not mere matters of history of what has been; they are recorded for our present comfort and support, "that we, through faith and comfort in the Scriptures, might have hope." Jesus is our friend, "a friend that loveth at all times and sticketh closer than a brother." And as Mr. Hart most sweetly says—

Digitized by Google

"That human heart he still retains,
Though thron'd in highest bliss;
He feels each tempted member's pains;
For our affliction's his."

THE FIFTH FACT. *His endurance of contradiction of sinners against himself.* In this portion of our subject we shall see the Redeemer travelling in the greatness of his strength. Manhood without sin. Notice first, John vii. 5, "For neither did his brethren believe in him." Who can tell the pain he endured to know that his own family did not receive him as the Christ or as a prophet? He knew and felt what it was to be a prophet without honour in his house. He told them their true character, but scorned to notice their base insinuations. Mark iii., 21. When much thronged and people pressed upon him, and had no leisure to eat; when *his friends* heard of it, they came out to lay hold on him, for they said *he is beside himself*, meaning to take him away from society, and put him under the care of a keeper, looking upon him as a maniac. Matt. xii. 46-50. His mother and his family seemed to have had no respect for him, his teaching, or his hearers, yet he endured their impertinent interruptions; but, oh, how dignified he disowned all such relationships where the will of his Father was disregarded!

Luke xvi. 16. What endurance under derision! The Pharisees *derided* him, laughed at him, hooted him, shouted at him, bantered him, reproached him as to his former occupation, *the carpenter*, and his want of Rabbinical learning; but he endured their banter and ridicule, turning their reproaches upon them in a way for their own good. "When he was reviled he reviled not again." "He made himself of no reputation."

Matt. xii. 24. Beelzebub was a vile name which the Pharisees gave him, meaning the greatest fiend, the foulest, the filthiest fiend. They called him gluttonous and a winebibber. This they did to lower him in the eyes of the people, to degrade him below a brute beast, worthy of being stoned as a disgraceful, untameable boy. (See Deut. xxi. 20, 21.) He was charged with madness. (John x. 20.) "He hath a devil, and is mad. Why hear ye him?" A man that ought to be kept in confinement and unnoticed. (John viii. 13.) He was charged with falsehood. This he repelled, as all truthful men ought to.

Digitized by Google

do. Falsehood must be checked if we have regard to truth and our own character. It is not always good advice, "live it down." We ought to vindicate ourselves whenever we have the opportunity.

His ministry and doctrine were entirely rejected by his own people, nationally, especially by the rulers. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." "Have any of the rulers believed on him?" His own townspeople were strongly prejudiced against him; and they were strengthened in their unbelief from the fact that his mother, his own brethren and his sisters were all against him. (See Matt. xiii. 54, 58.) He was reproached because of his former trade as a carpenter, as being derogatory in their eyes to a teacher of religion; but he turned their reproach to a practical improvement by advising them to take his yoke upon themselves, for his yoke was easy and his burden light. He was constantly being found fault with. See how he endured it. (Matt. xv. 1, 3.) If he was *praised*, it gave offence. He was found fault with for pronouncing absolution of sins. The ruler of a synagogue hit off his indignation at him for healing a crooked-backed woman on the sabbath He was murmured against because he mixed with the lower classes of society. The world, that is, society in common, hated him. (John xv. 18, 24.) Professors of religion aimed to entangle him, and to confuse him (Matt. xxii. 15) as to the tribute-money, seeking a sign from heaven. They tried to provoke him, to put him out of temper, lying in wait to catch something out of his mouth; but he endured it all with a calmness and placidity of spirit that exhibited the human nature without sin—"he pleased not himself," though marvellously self-possessed.

See also how he endured contradiction against himself. All were against him. He had to battle with his enemies alone, unaided. (John viii. 13, 33, 48, 49, 52, and 59; also ix. 40.) The Sadducees, our modern Socinians and Unitarians, questioned him as to the Resurrection, and put a most improbable case for an illustration. The Gadarenes being grieved for their losses in trade, prayed him to leave their coasts. Some of his false friends thought of getting rid of his preaching by advising him to go quite away; for, said they, "Herod will kill thee;" but he took little heed of such idle talk.

At length, his enemies were filled with madness and

Digitized by Google

command together what they might *do with* Him. What awful communion about the person of Jesus! How unlike the communion of his saints! They commune together of his love and doctrine, and what they might *do for* him. Do you, my friends, have such communion as this?

His enemies held a council against him (Matt. xii. 14), that is, formed themselves into a committee, an organised body, the object of which was to crush the kingdom of heaven, and to put out the light of the world. And they did actually make several attempts to carry out their designs for to take him into custody, and prosecute, him on any charge that could be raised; but he smiled at their futile and feeble attempts, and challenged them all, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?"

He was charged with blasphemy. This he repudiated, and severely rebuked those who made it. He defended his divine Sonship and mission with a stern front and boldness, which it would be well if all his true servants would strive to imitate, regardless of the discomfort of controversy. How serenely he bore the treachery of Judas. How passive when the traitor's band came to take him; what endurance in the High Priest's hall; in Pilate's Court of Justice; the insolent and abominably rude conduct of the Roman soldiers. O the meekness of the Lamb of God! he answered nothing, but bore it all against himself; of his own people there were none with him for his defence. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Now, you are called to "consider him who endureth such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." As believers in Jesus, we are called upon to rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, and have some experience of the same things in passing through life, that "when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad with exceeding joy." "If we be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are we." Let us, then, consider what contradictions Christ endured against himself. His whole life was a continued series of contradictions. He has passed through it all. He knows by heart felt experience the provokings, the aggravating speeches, the revilings and contumely of his enemies and his professed friends. He *feels* as well as

Digitized by Google

knows all these things. His divine and omniscient eye sees all the machinations and hate against his people, but his human heart feels for them. He gives grace as we need it, and forsakes us not in the hour of peril. On his enemies' part, he is evilly spoken of, but on our part he is glorified.

THE SIXTH FACT. *His weariness of body.* This is one of the mysteries of the incarnation; one which shows the essential manhood of Jesus in perfection. Weariness of the body; weariness of the spirit. He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, was found in the fashion of a man, and exhibited proofs of his manhood. Weariness of body is one. Jesus being wearied with his journey, sat on Jacob's well for rest. (John iv. 6.) John evidently was with him at the time, and noted it down for our instruction. Jesus was also fatigued with the labours of long preaching, for he fell in a deep sleep in the ship during the rough passage over the lake Gennesaret. (Matt. viii. 24.) We see also his weakness of body in his being unable to bear the pressure of the crowd about him. He could no more endure a stifling heat to suffocation than any other man; though as God he had life in himself. He endured hunger. Besides the forty days' abstinence in the wilderness, there were other times in which he hungered. One time there was so much teaching that he and the disciples "had no leisure to eat." He rose early from Bethany, and being hungered, he looked for figs to satisfy his craving, but none being there he declared its unfruitfulness for ever. He accepted hospitalities of food, lodging, and clothing for his personal necessities, all which showed he was in subjection to all the circumstances of man. View him in the garden of Gethsemane; his falling on the ground in a swoon. "Horror had taken hold of him," his soul was exceeding sorrowful, the mind had overpowered the body, an angel was seen supporting him. Had he not been truly man, he could not have been our substitute; had he not been God, he could not have been our Mediator. The human nature suffered in the person of the Son of God.

> "Bore all incarnate God could bear,
> With strength enough, and none to spare."

Nor could he bear the weight of his cross, for he had no rest during the night. He had been taken to and fro from the house of Caiaphas, before the council, before

Digitized by Google

Pilate's bar, scourged, sent to Herod, back again, treated with the vilest indignities upon his sacred person, all which had exhausted his bodily powers and completely prostrated him, so that he could not bear the weight of the cross on which he was to be crucified. Literally, he could not, as was designed, carry his own execution into effect. What shall we say to these things? Jesus suffered weariness of body and complete exhaustion, even under the worst and most extreme circumstances. Now the worst can never happen to his people, for he has gone through the worst himself. He knows well our weaknesses and our weariness. He knows by his own experience the measure of a man's strength; "for who knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man, which is in him?" (1 Cor. ii. 11.) Jesus thus knows the things of a man by the spirit of man which is in him. Thus it is he pities us, feels for us, is able to sympathise with us; but as God supports our spirits, gives strength for the day, and helps us to hold on our way, and to hold out to the end; then, to feel the need of his strength, and to have grace to look to the strong for strength, this is the benefit we gain by looking at this fact.

THE SEVENTH FACT. *His praying to his heavenly Father.* This is another of the mysteries of the incarnation. Jesus in prayer to God. Prayer is one of the chiefest and most distinctive marks of humanity. We have seen plain proofs of the manhood of Jesus which we could somewhat enter into, and think we could understand. But for what could Christ pray? Here we are baffled. He prayed at his baptism. In Luke xi. 1, it is said, as he was praying, the disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray." I suppose there was something so perfectly natural and appropriate, as an humble, good man before his God and Father, that they wished to be so taught. But he was without sin; he had no corruption of heart to deplore and pray against. We are also told in Luke vi. 12, he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued *all night* in prayer to God. (See also Mark vi. 46; Matt. xiv. 23.) He was there alone in prayer. (Mark i. 35.) He rose a great while before day, went into a solitary place, and *there* prayed. In all this, he not only sought seclusion, but I regard it as to the manner, "He cried unto God with his voice." He prayed not only mentally, but vocally—an evidence of the reality of his human feelings, thoughts, and desires;

Digitized by Google

but I confess I cannot understand it. I cannot explain it. Great is the mystery of godliness. If we had time we might refer to a variety of cases, as with the deaf and dumb boy, he sighed, and said *Ephphatha.* (Mark vii. 32, 34.) "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke xviii. 24.) He prayed at the grave of Lazarus, and the prayer recorded in John xvii. is emphatically the Lord's prayer, and concerned himself only as the God-man mediator.

He had much mental prayer, and for particular individuals, as for Peter: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Luke xxii. 33.) O what a mercy to have a friend at court like our precious Jesus! one who can see our danger when we cannot, and one that knows what to pray for, though we do not.

The most remarkable is his own case of praying for himself. I allude to his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." (Matt. xxvi. 39.) This, I think, is that to which the apostle chiefly refers where he says, "Who in the days of his flesh offered up prayer and supplication with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that which he feared."

In these instances of Christ's praying, we see the reality of his human nature; he felt those wants we feel when we come to God, and though he was God, yet, as our substitute on earth, his Godhead is not employed to save him from feeling human woes, human necessities; divine justice exacted the utmost to the very last mite, and, as our covenant head, in his human nature he paid the whole of what God's law demanded of us. His continuing all night in prayer is most astonishing; we only know of one similar, that of Jacob wrestling with the angel all night until break of day. If you and I know anything of such wrestling with God, then we can say, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help." Our astonishment, however, may serve to raise our expectations for the future. We see that in the beginning of our Lord's public work he prayed. On every momentous occasion, during the whole of his public ministry, we find him never ceasing to pray, and in the finishing of his Father's business, we find him still in prayer.

Digitized by Google

In what we have presented before us, we see the manhood of Christ portrayed without undervaluing his Godhead, or of unduly separating the human from the divine. In whatever light we view the separate and individual acts of our Lord, they are his personal acts, the acts of the God-man, Christ Jesus. So of his weariness, his praying, it was the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of his body, the Church, who bore the burden and heat of the day as other men. We cannot explain how it was that he was ever wearied in body, and how it was that his personal necessities were such that he prayed unto his Father. The Mediatorial character is displayed to us that we may be astonished with the wonders of Redeeming Love, and not to explain the complex union.

THE EIGHTH FACT.—*His Obedience to Divine Law.*—The nature and extent of the obedience which Christ rendered to the law of God demands our attention. The law of God demands that man should love and serve God with all his heart, mind, and strength; this constitutes the will and powers of the entire Person. Adam, our first father, our federal head, sinned in the heart before he raised his hand to take the forbidden fruit. The moment he felt the inclination for it, the heart was gone; and which engulphed all mankind in ruin and perdition; in the same ruin the whole Church of God was equally involved, and the recovery thereof was the business which God committed to his only begotten Son. In the fulness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law. When on earth, Jesus said emphatically, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." He humbled himself and became obedient to that law. His subordination was for the Church whom he represented—"he pleased not himself"—and because the Church was held in the bonds of the law, he submitted himself to those bonds that every member of it might have release. He assumed all their debts in order to gain them for himself; hence he took our nature that he might take our sin. He took our nature that he might render a perfect obedience to the law of God on our behalf. Thus, there was a double purpose in Christ taking our nature into personal union with himself. He was made sin for us; his substitutionary and expiatory work was rendered in a sinless nature and in a perfect manner by him

Digitized by Google

as the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered. His position as being in the circumstances or condition of a man—that is, in the form or nature of a servant to the law, as the preceding verse of our text describes him—is stated as the ground upon which he was held to obedience in his life, and to death at last. His obedience, then, was the obedience of a man, such as was due from man, whom he came to save and whom he represented in his person as their covenant head. It was a true obedience, for he was truly man. It was a perfect obedience, for he was a perfect man. What he did was what the law required; and what he submitted to endure, was what that law imposed. He came to comply with the Mosaic ritual as a believing Israelite. The law was in every iota, jot and tittle, perfectly fulfilled. No other person but the Son of God could have undertaken the work, and to no other person would the eternal Father have entrusted the business of our salvation. "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." The righteousness of the law was fulfilled *by him*, that it might be fulfilled in us. All his acts, which as a man he rendered, were mediatorial, rendered to God as his servant, on our behalf, as our covenant-head and substitute. Here is a theme for our everlasting contemplation and consolation. We are redeemed from the curse of the law, Christ being made a curse for us. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Well might the poet exclaim:

> "What wondrous love, what mysteries,
> In this appointment shine;
> My breaches of the law are his,
> And his obedience mine."

We have now arrived at our last particular, THE NINTH FACT.—*His Sufferings and Death.*—The death of Christ being the most important fact that ever occurred, we are not surprised that a vast interest should be taken by angels and glorified spirits, for Moses and Elijah left their bliss in heaven to commune with the Son of God to speak of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. What an important part it occupies in the

Digitized by Google

gospel history, the details are not simply evidences of truthfulness but of the prominence given to the fact. John gives special heed to these points, which are most conclusive of Christ's humanity; his thirst, refusing the vinegar, his prayer to his Father, his anguish of soul, the giving up his spirit to his Father, the sparing of his limbs, his heart being pierced to make sure he was really dead, which latter part, from the circumstance of the pericardium being filled with blood and water, has been shown by persons competent to judge of the physical causes of human death, that Jesus literally died of "a broken heart."

The manner in which Jesus treated his own death is remarkable—he educated his disciples to that view of his sufferings and death which they afterwards adopted in its fulness, though not then understood. He told them of things future, that when they did come to pass they might believe in him, and so preach Christ crucified, as the life of poor believing sinners. (Mark viii.; Matt. xvi.; Luke ix.) It began thus: Jesus questioning his disciples as to whom the people supposed him to be. The answer evidently placed them in a belief which they had not realised before, and when this unveiling of his person was made by Peter's confession, he began from that time to show unto his disciples how he must go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things, and be killed and raised again. Thus the declaration of his death dates from the first open confession of his glory. It would seem as if the disciples were unfit to receive instruction concerning the wonderful manner in which the power of death should assert itself over that body which was human flesh until they had first learned that the same body was more than mere human flesh; that he was not only the Son of man, but truly the Son of the living God; that is, that his person was complex. How true it is that even we ourselves fail to enter into the deep meaning of those great realities of redemption accomplished by the death of Christ until we believe and are sure that Jesus is the Son of the living God.

Again, the peculiar occasions of suffering which our Lord endured in anticipation of his death show how truly human were his feelings. (John xii. 20-28.) Certain Greeks desired to see him. He spake of his death under a parable of corn dying before it brought forth fruit, and then said, "now is my soul troubled"—at the immediate

Digitized by Google

propect of death, "and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The next occasion was on the eve of the Passover, how he was troubled in spirit; his prayer at the temple (John xvii.) speaks of his death in connection with the glory that was to follow. In Gethsemane he said, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even *unto death*," as if he felt his life sinking away—his agony must have been intense. Here you see the incarnate Son of God felt all the agony of a man in torture, the dread of death in full bodily health—he felt the need of help. Thrice he came to his three friends, but they were helpless, for they themselves were drowned in sorrow at the very sight. He felt his inability in his own strength to pass through the ordeal of suffering—his Father's vengeance against sin, and even shrunk from the task he had undertaken, but he was strengthened to bear the sword of justice sheathed in his very soul.

"How it was done we can't discuss,
But this we know, 'twas done for us."

How extremely painful to his mind must have been the diabolical treatment during the pretended judicial proceedings that preceded his death, but the only thing that moved the soul of the meek and lowly Jesus was the elevated voice of one who said, "I know not the man." The Lord *turned* and looked upon *him;* yes, Jesus felt most keenly the denial of his friend Peter in the hour of trial. O what are the best of men when left to their own confidence? "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

I shall not dwell on the circumstances of the Lord's death, but the manner of it deserves remark. What calm majesty when commending his spirit to his Father! it shows a glory in the midst of his sufferings. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Death had but a short triumph, yet sufficiently long for the satisfaction of divine justice to whom that death was made—it was the Son of God that died for man's sin, and it was because he asserted his divinity as the Son of God that he was accused of blasphemy, and for it was crucified; there is, therefore, an agreement between the act of men and his own act in the fact that JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, DIED FOR SIN; it also harmonises with the divine appointment, for had he been stricken dead by what is usually termed "the act of God," *men* could not have had so reliable an

Digitized by Google

evidence that he was the Son of God, but the earthquake and the darkness declared what the Jewish Sanhedrim disbelieved. One of the centurions, an intelligent heathen, believed the witnesses of the earth and the heaven, and exclaimed, "Truly this man was the Son of God." Another centurion said, "Certainly this was a righteous man." (Mark xv. 39; Luke xxiii. 47.) The death of Christ was truly human; it was by the hands of sinful men, so that they themselves were witnesses of the fact, thus the divine purpose for which he died, an atonement for sin, harmonises with his being killed by men on the charge and ground of blasphemy, "because, he being a man, made himself the Son of God." His death is the death of death to all his redeemed family—he died that they might live; but death could not possibly hold him. Law claims were satisfied, magnified, and honoured, hence he rose again, quickened by the Spirit. The life and death of Christ is the manifestation of the love of God. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

To conclude. I have been unable to dwell much on the different facts thus brought to show the reality of our Lord's human nature, but sufficient, perhaps, to lead you to further meditation. Though we do not deny it, I believe we do not receive this doctrine as we ought. We lose much comfort and consolation in those times of soul exercises when we need a pure human sympathy, as well as divine support, and this Jesus only can impart; it arises partly, from not entering into the deep mysteries of redeeming love, as exhibited in the earthly life and human experience of our Lord himself, and, likewise, shall I tell you? from those satanic temptations which sometimes are suggested to the believer, "that these mysteries of the incarnation are not true." O what a trial has it been to my faith many times, while preaching and writing on this great theme, to find such suggestions as the following thrust into my mind, "that no part of the life of Jesus is true." "The whole record of the mystery of godliness is a great sham;" "that there is no reality in the scheme of redemption, no congruity in it, being only a cunningly-devised fable and an intricate delusion, and religion but a human and vain superstition." O these fiery darts, they can only be repelled by faith in the Son of God; it is our

Digitized by Google

only shield. THE WORD OF GOD IS TRUE. It is the foundation of our belief. God seals the testimony to the conscience, and witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Let us, then, make ourselves more familiar with the various facts in the earthly life of our Lord, it will nourish our faith and prove in the hour of temptation a prop against despair, for when hope sinks low and faith is tried, and love gets chilled, we shall find the human life of Jesus a cordial to invigorate every grace of the Holy Spirit, a balm for wounded hearts. "He made himself of no reputation." Jesus went through the most painful and humbling services for the redemption and salvation of his people. He was so truly and properly man as to be made like unto his brethren. He was found in the common form and condition of man; he submitted himself to the lowest degree of service and suffering; he went through a course of obedience to his parents and magistrates in all lawful things which his condition in life as a man necessarily imposed upon him, but to his heavenly Father he, as his servant, answered all the demands of his holy law, both in fulfilling its precepts and suffering its curse, and this obedience he paid even unto death, even the ignominious, painful, and accursed death of the cross, to show that he stood in the place of transgressors who were under the curse of the law, and that he came to redeem them from it for them. Such was the Son of God and the work he undertook in the nature and likeness of men. There was no other method by which sinners could be justified by the deeds of the law, for they had broken it, and therefore were under condemnation, but "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his only Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, damned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Brethren, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, I commend these things to your attention. The manner in which I have treated them may appear peculiar and too abstract, but I am persuaded you will find much solid food for faith in the contemplation of the several facts now placed before you. That which is profitable, not the speculative, is what I have aimed at, in order to lead you more to realise the blessedness of Christ's life for you, for, as Mr. Kent truly says:

Digitized by Google

> "In all that Jesus did on earth,
> His church an interest have,
> Go trace him from his humble birth,
> Down to the silent grave."

It will bring you into closer communion with him; in all your sorrows and distresses it will lead you to pour out your heart before him, for there is no condition or circumstance in which your spirit can be placed but what he divinely knows and has a thorough human experience of. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, to make the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings." "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people. "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 10, 16, 18.) Amen.

"Now, concerning the collection for the saints," I cannot say with the apostle, as in another place, "Let there be no collections when I come," for our express object this morning is to have one. And as our object is good, I hope we shall have a good collection. "The poor," says our Lord, "ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good." We have now an opportunity of doing good to the household of faith. This is the first time we have asked you to help the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. It is a noble institution; let us do something worthy of the cause we are pleading; for look at the facts which the secretary has laid before me. At the present time, there are 623 aged and poor saints of God receiving annuities of various amounts: 71, of £10 10s. yearly; 401, of £5 5s.; 141, of £2 8s.; and 10 in workhouses, at 2s. per week. Besides which, there are 42 inmates in the Asylum at Camberwell. This constant flow of charity requires a constant flow of supply in money; give as God has prospered you; it is a capital investment, I can assure you, for "he that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given he will pay him again." The cause of the poor is the cause of God, and what we do for them we do for him. Amen.

Digitized by Google

THE GRAND CONSUMMATION

OF THE

MEDIATORIAL KINGDOM

OF THE

LORD JESUS CHRIST.

THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL SERMON

TO THE

CHURCH AND CONGREGATION MEETING AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, DARLING PLACE, MILE-END.

Delivered on Lord's Day Evening, December 22nd, 1867.

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power."—"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—1 COR. xv. 24, 28.

I HAVE been speaking of the things pertaining to "the kingdom of God" in five previous sermons. I have aimed to set forth the rise of this kingdom, its nature, and some of its characteristics; I have said a few things touching the King himself and also his subjects. I have not adverted to its *external* progress, nor to its future universality; neither do I intend so doing at this time; for my topics confine me to that which belongs to the kingdom of grace *within*. And now, in order to bring this series of discourses to a fitting conclusion, let me ask your attention to a few thoughts on the glorious consummation of the Mediatorial Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The question before us is unquestionably stupendous, magnificent, and sublime. At first sight it would seem so bright and dazzling as almost to confound us, and to baffle any attempt to approach it; but seeing that we have here a scripture truth, it is therefore profitable for doctrine; and as it is a doctrine, some light, some instruction, is to be derived from it, so that the Man of God may be perfect. May the Lord grant us his help and blessing in the opening of our understandings, that

Digitized by Google

we may in his light see light, so that we may understand the Scripture, and behold wondrous things out of the Book of his Law.

We have before us one of the most remarkable portions of God's Holy Word, and therefore we shall do well to give it a little close attention. Our first inquiry is, what is the sense of our text? Here, on the very threshold, we meet with difficulties; not from any ambiguity in the text, for the context explains that, but from our preconceived notions of what we understand by the word kingdom—its being delivered—and the Son himself being subject to the Father. If it were possible to divest ourselves of prejudices in favour of particular theories, doubtless our minds would receive the light of truth both sooner and purer; consequently, we must deal with the supposed obscurities attributed to the subject which we shall attempt to elucidate.

In the first place, I do not understand that our Lord Jesus Christ will ever cease to be King of Saints and King of Glory, and therefore there will be no surrender of what he is *naturally* and *essentially;* nor can his Sonship be ever otherwise than what it ever was, coessential, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father. The sense of the text appears to me to be this:—that when time shall be no longer, all the ends of Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom *on earth* being accomplished, Satan's power completely and for ever destroyed, all the ransomed church everlastingly secured in the heavenly state, the whole of that dispensation and office power which the Son of God possessed will then be completed and exercised no more. God the Father will then be seen, known, and loved, as he is, without the intervention of a Mediator for we shall see God as he is, not as now, as through a glass darkly, but then face to face. God-Jehovah, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, will be all in all, everything in everything to each individual member of the Church of God in its glorified state; the completion of which and its perpetuity will be the grand consummation of the Redeemer's mediatorial kingdom.

Having given you what I consider to be the sense of the text in its more prominent features, let us proceed to notice two or three particulars.

FIRST, let us inquire what is to be understood by *the end that is coming*, "Then cometh the end." The end

Digitized by Google

of Time—when Time shall be no longer—"The end of all things is at hand"—this time state of things will soon cease; it will soon cease with us who are now living, it will soon cease with all who are yet to follow us. The end of this world, with all its vicissitudes, temptations, sins, sorrows that afflict the saints of God; also the end of all ordinances and means of grace which they now need, and then shall be the consummation of the present mode of our Lord Jesus administering the affairs of providence and grace in this lower world; that is, after he has abolished every form of civil and ecclesiastical government, as they now exist; and all authority and power that men and devils have assumed in opposition to him as the head of all principality and power.

When this end shall be, our Lord has most emphatically stated "that is not for us to know." (Acts i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 36.) But certain it is that God has revealed that ere this period shall arrive Satan shall receive his final overthrow, personated by Gog and Magog; and it is equally certain that "the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. xxiv. 14.) Then the last judgment will be announced; it will be heralded by the shout of the Archangel and the trump of God. The Son of God will descend with great power and glory, he will come in all the majesty and grandeur of his Godhead; he will come without sin unto salvation; not as when he first came into our world, with all the weakness of humanity, the inconveniences of poverty and humiliation of his incarnate state, but with such magnificence and splendour as the world never yet saw, nor any heart conceived. He will be attended with thousands of his saints, he will be seated on his great white throne; the dead shall be raised, every eye shall see him, the books will be opened; the saints will hear his voice, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" the wicked and all who know not the Gospel will hear their doom pronounced, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" yes, the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all who forget God, these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. Then

Digitized by Google

this world as it now exists will be burnt up, and thus there will be a full and final completion of the present mediatorial dispensation. God cares but little for this world, except for his elect's sake; but before it is burnt up, at the great assembly of all mankind before the bar of God oh what a division will then take place, it will be an everlasting separation of the righteous from the wicked. The Son of God "shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, for the Lord knoweth them that are his: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." My friends, we shall all be there, we shall all see the great sight, each one of us will feel we have some personal interest in the proceedings of that tremendous day; the question turns upon each *even now*—ON WHICH SIDE SHALL I STAND? Let the solemn question riddle through your very soul, and if it should disturb your night's rest, it will do you no harm; it may do you good. Think it over.

We will now proceed in the SECOND place to inquire as *to the Kingdom to be delivered up.*

What is to be understood by the word *kingdom?* The term here does not signify mere kingship, reign, or the possession and exercise of kingly power; but dominion in the sense of *territory or realm*—that, in short, over which the king reigns. The kingdom of Christ is most extensive; it includes not only his church, but all things in the world, in subordination to his people's spiritual interests; for "he is the head over all things to the Church which is his Body." (Eph. i. 22, 23.) "He rules in the midst of his enemies." (Ps. cx. 2.) The government of the world is committed to Christ—"The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son." (John v. 22.) "All power in heaven and in earth." (Matt. xxviii. 18.) By him kings reign and princes rule. (Prov. viii. 15, 16.) "There was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve him." (Dan. viii. 14.) "For all things are put under his feet." (Eph. i. 22.) It is of his reign over "*enemies*" that the Apostle is speaking; now, at the end of this world, when all things shall have been subdued to him, the kingdom will have been brought to perfection; the work which his Father gave him to do will have been finished. The whole elect of God shall

Digitized by Google

have been sought out, sanctified, called, redeemed from all iniquity, and gathered together into one; their enemies, even death itself, shall have been destroyed, and the whole scheme of providence and grace on earth shall have been developed and completed. This kingdom of grace and all things on earth subordinate to it, will be brought to a state of grand consummation; all the ends of Christ's mediatorial work shall have been accomplished, and the ransomed flock all brought home to glory, and their everlasting felicity fully secured. Happy day! glorious consummation!

Jesus shall soon collect his sheep,
And, when collected, safely keep;
Omnipotence preserves secure.
Each feeble soul by him enroll'd,
Under one Shepherd, in one fold,
Shut in, they shall go out no more.

In the THIRD place, let us inquire what is to be understood by *the Kingdom being delivered up to the Father by the Son.*

This portion of our subject we cannot so quickly dispatch as the former, for this is where we have to deal with one of the difficulties alluded to in my introductory remarks. It appears that some divines have thought that at the end of this world, Christ's mediatorial reign is to terminate altogether, and the government of the kingdom through eternity to devolve *on God*, essentially considered; that is to say, exclusive of the personalities of Father, Son, and the Spirit, "that after our Lord has effected the resurrection and transfiguration of the dead, he will immediately give up his judicial and mediatorial authority and power to God the Father, who will for ever after exercise an absolute dominion over the spirits of the glorified, without requiring, as now, the intervention of any Mediator as the living medium of intercourse and communication."

Now, there seems to me some confusion of ideas in the minds of those who have thus expressed themselves; I have given you the very words that were once spoken in this place by a friend of mine, a very able and well-known preacher in another denomination; and I have since met with the same opinions in the writings of Dr. Owen* and Dr. Pye Smith.† If I did not know

* Owen's Works, vol. xii., pp. 294, 295, 338, 339.

† Dr. Pye Smith, Messiah, vol. iii., pp. 257, 258; Dr. Pye Smith on Sacrifice, p. 92.

Digitized by Google

their sentiments better, I should be almost ready to suppose they thought that the personality, or at least the office characters of the Lord Jesus Christ, with all the glory and honour he has derived from them, were to cease altogether on the completion of his mediatorial work on earth, which I believe is not what they intend. Indeed, the impression made by the discourse alluded to was, there would be no Jesus Christ in heaven; I asked my friend if that was what he meant; he said, "No, decidedly not."

My dear friends, let it be a fixed truth in our minds that the divine union which subsists betwixt Christ and his Church is eternal and indissoluble: neither things present, nor things to come, nothing in nature, above or beneath, can ever separate them from his love; and their final state is expressly called an entering into the ETERNAL kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Son of God will ever be the king of saints, the king of glory; the Church of Christ will ever be united to him as his body, and he to them as their ever living and glorious head. Instead of there being a "*termination* of the mediatorial reign of Christ over the Church," and of "the great *parenthesis* of the mediatorial administration," as some divines purport, the scriptures set forth, the grand consummation as "the marriage of the Lamb" and his bride the Church; the Church complete, the Church glorified, will be the married wife, a settled, unalterable, and perpetual relationship, where the husband will be everlastingly loved, praised, and adored throughout eternity; so that this does not point to an end or period being put unto the perpetuity of either his kingship or his kingdom; it does not in any way respect the final extinction of his kingdom, but *the consummate perfection* of it, for the subjects of it, the whole body of his elect, will be presented to the Father to be eternally glorified and crowned by him, and therefore Christ will never cease to reign nor ever be without a kingdom.

But further, our Lord's delivering up the kingdom to the Father cannot mean that he will return to his own personal station as the divine and eternal Son, for that would imply that he must have left his personal station, which he did not; he stooped, indeed, from his personal dignity, but he did not lay it aside. His divine and eternal Sonship was never lost or sunk; for at the

Digitized by Google

moment of his deepest humiliation, he possessed his personal dignity as the Son of God, and in fact, but for this, his humiliation would have been in vain, and without its merit and value. Neither does it imply that on delivering up the kingdom to the Father, that Jesus will cease to be king or mediator. The Kingdom which the Son of God possesses over his Church will never be given up.

Our Lord Jesus Christ delivering up the kingdom to God the Father no more proves that he will in all respects cease to be a king, or have any further reign or dominion, than the Father's delivering the kingdom to the Son proves that the Father himself ceased to be a king. The power and dominion which the Father gave to the Son *by virtue of his being the Mediator*, the Man Christ Jesus, is that, and that alone, which the Son will deliver up to the Father. Christ's natural and essential kingdom, which he has in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost, *will have no end;* and he in his eternal manhood will wear the honour of all his mediatorial work. As the Head of the Church he will for ever and ever live in unlimited authority and glory, and therefore, as I have just stated, in these respects, his throne and kingdom will never be delivered up, but for ever remain.

But let us come to the Scriptures, "to the word and the testimony;" if we speak not according to this word, we shall throw no light upon what we are discussing. God's word is truth; in his light we shall see light. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever—His name shall endure for ever—Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end—In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever—His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed—He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end—An entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,—and he shall reign for ever and ever." All these passages

Digitized by Google

refer to the reign of Christ as mediator, and fully and strongly express eternal duration, or strict perpetuity, the longest possible duration of which the things spoken of can admit.

The kingdom then, which the Son will deliver up to the Father is that which the Father gave the Son, namely, the dispensation in which Christ rules and exercises his authority in heaven, earth, and hell; as king of saints, king of nations, and head over all principality and power. During this dispensation, from the fall of Adam to the last sin that shall be committed on earth, is also the kingdom of grace. And when all the purposes of this office power which the Father committed to Christ shall have been fully accomplished, perfected, and completed by the actual, complete, and final conquest over every enemy, the Devil himself for ever shut up in chains and darkness, and the gathering in of the Church fully completed, the Mediator shall then appear and *give in to the Father a full account of his mediatorial authority*—"Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me; of all them which thou hast given me, I have lost none, but the son of perdition, he is lost, that the scripture might be fulfilled;" thus *presenting to the Father the kingdom in that state of consummation to which he shall have then brought it*, and receiving from him a clear testimony of his approbation. The purposes of the kingdom being accomplished, Jesus declares to his Father that the work which he gave him to do he has finished, and now he comes to him, saying, "Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one." Here, in these words, I regard we have the true and only method in which the Son will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. My own impression is, that this passage and others contained in the Intercessory prayer of our Lord, (xvii. John) was the basis, under the Spirit's teaching, upon which the apostle has founded the doctrine contained in our text. Jesus declares that the work given to him is most satisfactorily accomplished. He now comes to sit down for ever on his throne, with the Father, to enjoy the fruit, the rest from his pains, his labour, and his humiliation; and he desires that the Church for whom he suffered, and which he has redeemed with his own blood, should have his joy fulfilled

Digitized by Google

in themselves—the joy of satisfaction, the joy of complete, full, and final consummation.

We now pass on to notice in the FOURTH place,—*The subjection of the Son to the Father.* "Then shall the Son himself be subject unto the Father."

This phrase is one of the fancied strongholds of the Unitarian, the Arian, the semi-Arian, and the Sabellian. I had intended *not* to enter this field of controversy, but I see I cannot avoid it; and as this is probably the last opportunity I may ever have of bearing my public testimony to the true and proper doctrine of the divine and eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, I shall have no hesitation in stating my views of this debated question of the inferiority of the Son to the Father. I am aware that "the Sonship question" is considered by some to be a strife about words, "each opponent," it is said, "using a different word, but meaning the same thing." Some consider it "a ministers' question only;" others, that it is "quite a minor question." Now, nothing can be a minor question that affects the foundation of our faith; for what is meant by Christ being the foundation and corner-stone on which the Church of God is built, is the right understanding and cordial receiving into the heart the true doctrine of the Person of Christ the Son of God, the Mediator of the New Covenant? This surely is a most important question, and well deserves our careful and prayerful study. As to its being a *ministers' question* only, I reply, that whatever concerns the ministry must also concern those for whom the ministry is designed—the Church of God at large. Just let me remind you of what I stated at the re-opening of this place, in my sermon on the true knowledge of Jesus Christ being a divine revelation:* "That without right views of the person of Christ, as well as of his work, the apostles would have been utterly incompetent to have taught the truth as it is in Jesus; nor could the Church of God have been edified, or built upon either *incorrect* or *imperfect* views of so fundamental a doctrine." Now, this cannot be a professional question for ministers only; it is one which most materially affects *the people themselves.* Its practical answer undoubtedly depends upon us very much to give, but we shall never be able to give an answer to any good purpose unless the question becomes more general in the

* See "The Truth as it is in Jesus," Sermon No. 9.

Digitized by Google

churches, and it is one, in my opinion, about which it becomes the duty of *every member* to be fully persuaded in his own mind.

As to those who say "it is a strife about words," I reply, not so; words have their meaning, and despite the pertinacity of those who assert that they mean the same thing by speaking of Christ as the Eternal *Word*, as we who speak of Christ as the Eternal *Son*, this I as positively deny; they call themselves strict Trinitarians, which I cannot for one moment admit. Do, dear friends, oe pleased to observe what I am about to state, and never mind what careless or unthinking persons say about controversy. This is for your life, your peace, and your hope, for at no time can a truth be uttered without its confronting some error. Now listen. It is well known there are many, particularly by some among the strict Baptists, who, because the Lord Jesus, in his human nature and miraculous conception, was called the Son of God (Luke i. 35), restrict his *Sonship* to that sense, as do also the Socinians, and affirm that in his divine nature he was not the Son but the *Word* of God. Now this to my mind is a fearful heresy, it is the pith of Arianism, and flatly contradicts the Scriptures (1 John ii. 23); and herein, remarks an excellent writer, "they who hold this heresy are led by human reasoning, and not by simple faith; they connect with their idea of Sonship inferiority to the Father, whereas in Scripture, if we honestly search it, we shall find it is just the contrary." Not *inferiority*, but equality with the Father, is the consequence of Christ being the Son of God. (John v. 18.) "The Jews sought to kill him, because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." This was in their view blasphemy, for which they judged him worthy of death, because he said, "I am the Son of God." And even in human sonship, as I have elsewhere stated,* a son is of the very same nature as his father, and in that *nature* is equal. A son of man has as much the nature and properties of man as his father has; so has the Son of God in like manner the nature and properties of God.

I grant that *in the station* which a son occupies in the family of his father, there is *inferiority*, and necessarily so, from the very nature and fitness of things which exist in the constitution of the human race; but *this inferiority*

* "Truth as it is in Jesus," Sermon 13, p. 16.

Digitized by Google

of station in respect of the *Sonship of Christ* cannot in any way apply to his *personality* in the divine and ever-glorious Trinity; for with the Father and the Spirit the Son is co-equal as well as co-essential and co-eternal. Of this we have abundant evidences from Scripture, which I need not at this time bring forward, for I have already, in my sermon on "The Divine and Eternal Sonship" stated many arguments and proofs to that effect.* I grant also, that in human sonship there is inequality of years, so far as the manifestation of the personal subsistences of father and son are concerned, but not as relationship is concerned, for the paternity and the offspring are equal in point of *generation*. Now, in the divine Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ there is necessarily equal eternity; for how could Christ be God, or have the nature of God, and not be eternal? Whatever is in God, is in God from everlasting, and must be to everlasting, because God is incapable of change. If God was always the Father, there was always the Son. Human generation is a thing of time, as man is a creature of time. But divine generation is an eternal thing, as God is eternal. So is Christ said to have been in the beginning with God, to have been the eternal life with the Father, and "his goings forth to have been of old from everlasting." (Mic. v. 2.) An infallible proof of the pre-existence of his person as the Son of God. (J. T. Parker.)

What the mystery is of that generation, Scripture has not revealed, nor is it necessary that we should know it. I think it is impossible for man to know it. I believe it, though I cannot explain it. What I mean by it is, the Son of God's own eternal necessary self-existence in the bosom of the Father. I know the doctrine is reviled. But by whom? Only by those who deny that the Sonship of Christ is founded in his divine nature, holding that he is a Son by office and not by nature. Now, the Scriptures nowhere intimate that Christ is the Son of God by office, or that his Sonship is founded in his human nature, but they speak of him plainly and positively as the Son of God in the relationship of a Son to a Father; "the only-begotten of the Father," "*the* only-begotten Son," "*his* only-begotten Son," "my beloved Son," &c. As the Son of God, he comes of the Father by way of inexpressible generation, proper to himself only as being an eternal

* This Sermon can be had separately of the publisher, J. Gadsby.

Digitized by Google

generation, by communication of the same essence and properties; and a generation wherein the Father is not before the Son, but both are alike eternal. Now we cannot define to the satisfaction of carnal reason what carnal reason might happen to demand of us. The doctrine of the Trinity is divine, a mystery above the reach of reason, and can be known only by revelation. I am satisfied with being brought to *the acknowledgment* of the mystery; I seek for no explanation. "The mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," is, and ever will be, to man, a divine mystery. Nevertheless, it is a truth for my faith to receive and lay hold of, and whatever "full assurance of understanding" I may have of other truths as *revealed*, this of the divine and eternal generation of the Son of God I receive and acknowledge as the mystery of God *declared* in his Word, though not *explained*. (See also Appendix, page 69.)

And here let me also remark that in most of those passages referring to Christ as the "first-begotten," "firstborn," the word is employed not in reference to either his divine or human nature, but because of *the purpose* for which the Lord will come again into the world,—namely, as the Heir and Lord of all. In Heb. i. 6, Christ's first coming is spoken of as the act of the Father. Our Lord himself says (John viii. 42), "I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me." So of his resurrection and exaltation; "The Father raised him up and gave him glory." It is the Father who will send him again (Acts iii. 20.) It is the Father who will put all things under his feet. Here appears the glory of his Father's love in sending his Son, and the glory of the Son's obedience in voluntarily subordinating himself to the will of the Father, that he might be the mediator between God and man. As Mediator he acts from God to us, and from us to God. And this administration which he exercises as the Son of God and the Son of Man over men on earth, is the kingdom which will be delivered to the Father; the *purposes* for which the Mediatorship of Christ was exercised being fully accomplished. Not that the kingdom shall cease to be the Son's, but that all things shall at last be referred to the glory of God the Father.

This subjection of the Son to the Father must

Digitized by Google

therefore be interpreted and understood with great care, because of the subtle forms of error which are broached by some professed ministers of truth, especially those who hold the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ, for, generally speaking, they artfully conceal their pernicious notions under very sugary and savoury expressions about the person of Christ. The *Sabellian* form of error is, that the terms "Father and Son" are mere names, and will be no more when the mediatorial kingdom on earth shall cease. The *Arian* sense is, that Christ in his divine nature is inferior to the Father. The *semi-Arian* sense is, that Christ in his *Sonship* is not co-eternal with the Father, being only the Son of God in his *complex* natures; that is, he was not the Son of God until he became incarnate. Another form of error is, that the human nature of Christ will be absorbed into the divine; now, in my sermon on the Eternal Manhood of Christ, preached this night fortnight, I showed that the manhood of Christ will always continue, and that it is in his manhood he will be seen by the glorified Church of God. He went up to heaven in the veritable body which was crucified; it was identified by the disciples after his resurrection to be the same, and in that same body he will be seen when he comes a second time to judge the world; in the same body he will continue to be visible to all the glorified Church of God throughout eternity. The subjection of the Son to the Father is to be understood in respect of the termination of his official character as Servant of the Father and Mediator between the Church and the Father, and not of his Sonship in any respect whatever,—the sense is not that the Son ever was, or ever will be subordinate unto the Father as God, or subject unto him personally considered—for he is eternally co-equal with the Father in nature, power, and glory. I am aware this sense will not be received by those who look upon the Sonship of Christ as founded in his human nature, and therefore but an office character, and not a relationship; and however fine some may draw the line of distinction, and yet claim to be orthodox, it is impossible to avoid running into the Sabellian and Arian heresies, because they are on an *un*scriptural foundation; they confound the personality of the Sonship with the mediatorial capacity and functions which he undertook; and this I may say, so far as I can perceive it, is

Digitized by Google

the sum and substance of all the heresies, and the cause of all the confusion and strife that have existed on this subject; this is no trifling matter, for the drift of it all is, *a denial of the Son of God* as such, we prove it on all points, the moment we come to such a text as we have now before us; here it is, we see, their human reason comes short of the truth as it is in Christ. Now, dear hearers, do pray understand this, the words, "*The Son also himself shall be subject*," do not refer to his *nature or relationship* at all, for that would contradict all scripture—but look at the context yourself, and see if it does not mean that the official capacity and functions which the Son of God undertook in order to govern nature, providence, and grace in this world in his own name, will, when the end shall come, cease to be administered by him as Mediator, that kingdom being a vicarious one. It will not be then in *his* hands as it is now, as Mediator, but with the infinite and eternal Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There will be no more a delegated power, no more the intervention of the mediatorship, or of any means of grace whatever. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known."

But one word more upon this vital point, the person of Christ. Without a constant reference to the wonderful constitution of the person of Christ, as both God and man, it is impossible to understand and reconcile the apparently contradictory things which are spoken of him, as that he should be "one with the Father," and yet that "the Father should be greater than he;" that he should be "the root and branch of David"—that he should be *by nature* "Lord of all," and yet be *made* Lord by the Father—that he should have all in his own right and yet the Father should give him all—that he should swear by himself, that to him every knee should bow, every tongue confess, and be *ordained* of God to be the judge of quick and dead—that all things should be created by him and for him, and that he should be *appointed* heir of all things—that all power should be given him in heaven and in earth—that the Son himself shall be subject to the Father. Let us hear the Son himself: "I and my Father are one." "All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not

Digitized by Google

the Father which sent him." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I am the Son of God." "If ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins." Brethren, if we are under the teachings of the Spirit, we shall not only hold the faith of God's elect in respect of the true and proper doctrine of Christ's Sonship, but we shall by faith in the mystery of his person as the God-man see all these difficulties vanish. All the varying statements are beautifully and admirably harmonised, because we see that some are spoken of him in his *divine* nature, so that he is the root of David; some of him in his *human* nature, as that he is the offspring of David, and others of him in the conjunction of *both natures* in one person, as the God-man Mediator, as in (Heb. i. 2), that God has "spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." So in the text before us, the subjection of the Son himself to the Father does not refer to his person as the Son, for the relationship is one of nature and essence, but it refers to the dominion he held officially under the Father, of creation, providence, and grace, that fulness of authority which it pleased the Father should dwell in him, "all things are delivered unto me of my Father. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." He is Lord of angels and of men. The devils are subject to him. The things in heaven, in earth, seen and unseen, temporal and eternal, are all committed to Christ, because he is the Mediator, he is the Mediator because he is the Son of God, and when the end of his mediatorship shall come, the Son will no longer exercise his authority, it will fall into the hands of the Father, who first gave it into the hands of the Son. For the end of time being come, no more enemies to subdue, no more of the elect to save, the whole body of Christ being complete and glorified with him in heaven, God then shall be all in all.

I have detained you a long time on this portion of our subject, but its vast importance must be considered a sufficient reason. Our text is, perhaps, one of the severest touchstones we can have to test our own faith in the Son of God, or the hollow sentiments of those who in words exalt the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners and the chief of ten thousand, but who, nevertheless, deny his personality as the eternal Son of God. Strange! strange it is that this glorious truth should be disputed and kicked

Digitized by Google

at by the professed followers of the Lamb of God. It is attested by himself,* it was acknowledged by his own disciples,† it was owned by devils,‡ it is attested by his own Father.§ It was declared by his resurrection from the dead, it was preached by the apostles. John wrote his gospel and an epistle, that it might be believed, and he declares that he who denies the Son is Antichrist. (1 John ii. 22, 23) and is not to be received. Oh, my dear friends, let us, in the strength of the Lord, hold fast the doctrine of God's own word, that Jesus is the Son of God. This truth is simple and plain to the sincere follower of the Lamb. What was the Eunuch's confession, "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God;" and when Paul began his ministry, Luke tells us, "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is 'the Son of God.'" He preached Christ, because he is the Son of God. Here, then, is scripture example for preacher and people. We believe in Christ because he is the Son of God. If Christ be not the Son of God, we have no sure foundation for our faith. Let me ask you, what is it that you believe? You have often heard me quote the well-known lines of John Newton; I will repeat them once more; it is the last time I shall utter them in this place:

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest
Unless you think rightly of him."

I must now, in the FIFTH and last place, briefly touch upon the concluding part of our text—*The Godhead becoming All in All*—"That God may be all in all."

This is the sublime sequel to the grand consummation of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ upon earth. The Church of God is now before the Throne of God and the Lamb. "These are they which have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst

* John ix. 35–37; x. 36; Mark xiv. 61, 62.
† Matt. xiv. 33; xvi. 15–17.
‡ Matt. viii. 29; Mark iii. 11; Luke iv. 41.
§ Matt. iii. 17; Luke ix. 35.

Digitized by Google

any more, neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." One with Christ, one with the Father and the Spirit, their bliss is now complete and it is eternal. As God in Christ was their All in All when on earth, so now in heaven, Christ in God is their everlasting All in All. The Deity in Christ will be everything in everything to the Church around the Throne in heaven. Even in this time state the Deity is now the All in All, the sum of all good to the spiritual believer; for this he sighs, for this he longs, for this he prays; and the more he is enabled to realise the great fact, the more he feels it is his life, for Christ is his life; he lives now by faith on the Son of God, who loved him and gave himself for him. In the heavenly state he will see him as he is, in his glorified, eternal manhood, and he will be like him; the believer in his glorified flesh shall see God. God will be all in all to him as his glorious head. The Father, who was only known before through the Son, will be unveiled to his adoring view, and he will be for ever with the Lord. (Rev. xxi. 2. xxii. 5.) There will be without the intervention of a Mediator, to all the saints, immediate access to the throne of God. The infinite Jehovah, the eternal Three-One, the great I AM. The one living and true God, in their distinct personalities of Father, Son, and Spirit, will be the object of adoring wonder, admiration, and praise; in whose presence the saints will eternally be, and with whom they shall have uninterrupted fellowship, and a perpetuity of holy joy. God will be all things to them, without the use of such means and helps as they now require; he will be all their perfection and all their bliss. All the office characters which Christ sustained to his Church when on earth, as their Prophet, Priest, and King; as their Shepherd, Husband, Brother, Friend, will be as so many crowns on his glorious head, and will be the ground of renewed and animated songs of praise. Such will be the perfect consummation of the kingdom of God's dear Son that the whole scheme of salvation will then be seen to be the embodiment of the glory and perfections of the whole Deity. The splendour and brilliancy, the magnificence and glory of the place cannot be imagined; its unbounded pleasures, its complete bliss

Digitized by Google

and happiness cannot be conceived; we must die to know it. But, remember, none shall obtain admission there but followers of the Lamb.

"Pure are the joys above the sky,
And all the region peace;
No wanton lips, nor envious eye,
Can see or taste that bliss."

"For the eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." The Church of God will see the glory of Christ, the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. The glory of the Father will be manifested in all its rich effulgency; the Church of Christ will then see God. To the Church the Deity will be all in all. The more the perfections and glory of the divine Eternal shall be seen, the more fully will the Church realise their bliss and the greatness of that redemption which has saved them from all their sin and woe. Salvation by free, sovereign, unmerited grace alone, will be the theme of their everlasting song. Christ, our Redeemer is now, on earth, the believer's all; but oh, how imperfect our faith, our love, our hope, and our peace; sin mars all our enjoyment, but in heaven all the work of grace will be complete, and divested of everything sinful and creature weakness; then our enjoyment will be perfect, for Christ will be our ALL. The Fatherhood of the Father will then be understood and loved in all its reality and blessedness; we shall enter somewhat into the knowledge of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God. The Holy Spirit in all his sweet, soft, and gracious influences will be experienced in their fullest extent, and to the utmost of each believer's capabilities. The glory of Jehovah will then be displayed in all its inconceivable magnificence, shining forth in all its fulness of majesty, grandeur, and brightness throughout the countless ages of eternity. God will be All in All to every humble soul who now feels and desires Christ to be their All in All.

But before I close let me just say a word or two to those good and gracious souls who feel they cannot take such lofty flights as we appear to have been taking this evening. They think, perhaps, we have ascended far above their comprehension, as with the wings of an eagle, and with an eagle eye have pierced the heavenly regions

Digitized by Google

and even eternity itself. They are desirous, too, of soaring heavenwards, but on the wings of a smaller bird, though it be to take a lower flight. The utmost of their longings have been, O that I had wings, like a dove would I fly away and be at rest. My soul longs for rest and peace. I would not live here alway; I wish I was done with the world myself and sin, I can truly say,

"Nothing but this my ardent plea,
Jesus, reveal thyself to me."

To be found in Christ is my one absorbing thought and desire; tn behold his face in righteousness is my earnest prayer, and to have that assurance, so as to say, I shall be satisfied when I awake in his likeness. Now, if this language be the sincere desire of thy soul, what precious proofs thou hast that thy heart is right with God, and that thy eternal state is most blessedly secure! It may be thou hast been unable to enter into those deeper truths and mysteries which have occupied our attention at this time, but this need not trouble thee for one moment, since thou art on the foundation—Christ the Saviour of sinners, Christ the believer's sure refuge, Christ the believer's all. *Not what we know, but whom we love*, is the true touchstone of a living faith. I know of no surer evidence of belonging to Christ than when the soul can appeal to him and say, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee; whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee." Is this your case? Yes, you say, it is; and I can also say, there is no book, no friend, no minister, no ordinance precious to me without the presence and blessing of Jesus; I can enjoy nothing but as I enjoy it in him. I am dissatisfied with everything of creature pleasure or comfort if it have not the stamp of his approval. I thirst, but it is for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God." Well, all I can say is, you are as near to heaven as you can be on this side eternity; your state is most blessed; already you are realising the glorious truth that God is your all in all; you have reached the summit of what the apostle has laid down in our text to be the grand consummation of the Saviour's kingdom in glory. God all in all, and all that is wanted to complete your bliss is an abundant entrance into that everlasting kingdom; this you may fully expect, for it is positively promised by the Lord himself.

Digitized by Google

The Lord grant of his mercy and grace that you and I may form part of that happy throng in that blessed world above, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. Amen.

Thus I have brought to a conclusion my sixth sermon on the kingdom of God's dear Son; and with it, my ministry in this place is now closed. I have laboured here, including a former period, rather more than five years, not without some spiritual fruit, I believe; but latterly so little, as not to justify me any longer in thrashing straw or ploughing upon a rock. Throughout my pastorate our little church has subsisted in love, peace, and unity; and for the sake of the few who have continued with me to this day, I take my leave of them with regret. I am bound to acknowledge that the Lord has given several testimonies to the word of his grace as dispensed by me, and very many by means of my printed sermons; so far I am convinced that the Lord has owned my ministry, and that he thrust me into this corner of his vineyard; and I am equally convinced that there is now no more work for me to do in this place. Some external good, I am happy to state, has been accomplished by means of funds supplied to us. The sick and the suffering poor have received £77 4*s.* 6*d.* in 808 payments; and £61 18*s.* 2*d.* has been expended in good, useful books and tracts for the Mile End Gate omnibus men, and others in the locality. Several good results have been known, in which it would appear that the Lord has condescended to use the efforts made to reach the minds and hearts of this neglected class of men. To God be all the praise.

And now, dear brethren and sisters in church fellowship, and also to you, my dear friends, who have worshipped with us, I bid you farewell. I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.

The 730th hymn was sung, Gadsby's Selection,

"All hail the power of Jesu's name."

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX.

(REFERRED TO AT PAGE 60.)

At the time this sermon was preached, I made some observations on what I considered to be a *key* to the differences that exist between some of the opponents to the views advanced in these pages on the divine and eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have designedly omitted the statement in the sermon, but have reserved it for an appendix. The reader is herewith presented with the substance of what was then expressed.

Dr. Chalmers says, "If the Scriptures be given us by inspiration of God, then all questions in religion resolve themselves into questions of grammar." I confess I am inclined to attach some importance to this remark, and would apply the principle it involves to the subject here in dispute—the eternal Sonship. For instance, take the words, "the first begotten," in the *active* sense instead of in the *passive* sense. My opinion is, that the distinction between the *active* and *passive* senses in those places where the word "begotten" is used, as applied to the Son of God, is not sufficiently observed by our objectors, or else it is designedly ignored. I have no need for illustration from any of their writings to set forth what I am advancing, but shall produce a quotation or two from authors well deserving our attention on this subject; the first is from Dr. Guyse, on Col. i. 15. "The first-born of every creature." "The words (*prototokos pases ktiseos*) rendered *the first-born of every creature*, signify also *born or begotten before all creation:* or, as *Isidore*, an ancient *Greek* writer observed, if the *accent* of the word (*prototokos*) be placed on the last syllable but one, instead of the last but two, it signifies not *passively* the *first begotten*, but *actively* the *first begetter*, or former of all things, and in proof of Christ's being so, it is added in the next words, *For by him were all things created;* and v. 17, it is said, not that *he was made*, but that *he is before all things*. (Vide *Isid.* lib. iii., epist. 31.) In the first way of understanding this passage, according to our translation, it relates to Christ's office, as head of the Church: in the second, it relates to what is usually called the eternal generation of the Son: in the third, it relates to his being the efficient cause, or the Creator of all things, and in all these views he is considered in the following verses."

Digitized by Google

Dr. Gill on the same text, Col. i. 15, "*The firstborn of every creature*, not the first of the creation, or the first creature God made; for all things, in the next verse, are said to be created by him, and therefore he himself can never be a creature; nor is he the first in the new creation, for the apostle, in the context, is speaking of the old creation, and not the new: but the sense either is, that he was begotten of the Father in a manner inconceivable and inexpressible by men, before any creatures were in being; or that he is the *first parent*, or bringer forth of every creature into being, as the word will bear to be rendered, if instead of *protótokos*, we read *prototókos*, which is no more than changing the place of the accent, and may be easily ventured upon, as is done by an ancient writer (Isidore), who observes, that the word is used in this sense by *Homer*, and is the same as *protogonos, (first parent,)* and *protoktises, (first creator;)* and the rather this may be done, seeing the accents were all added since the apostles' days, and especially seeing it makes his reasoning, in the following verses, appear with much more beauty, strength, and force; he is the first parent of every creature, *for by him were all things created*," &c.

The same esteemed author on Heb. i. 5, says: "Christ is the Son of God; not by creation, nor by adoption, nor by office, but by nature; he is the true, proper, natural, and eternal Son of God; and as such is owned and declared by Jehovah the Father in these words; the foundation of which relation lies in the begetting of him; which refers not to his nature, either divine or human: not to his divine nature, which is common with the Father and the Spirit; wherefore, if his was begotten, theirs must be also, being the same undivided nature, common to all three; much less to his human nature, in which he is never said to be begotten, but always to be made, and with respect to which he is without father: nor to his office, as Mediator, in which he is not a son, but a servant; besides, he was a son previous to his being a prophet, a priest, and king; and his office is not the foundation of his Sonship, but his Sonship is the foundation of his office, or by which it is supported, and which fits him for the performance of it: but it has respect to his divine person; for as in human generation, person begets person, and like begets like, so it is in divine generation; though care must be taken to remove all imperfection from it, as divisibility and multiplication of essence, priority and

Digitized by Google

posteriority, dependence, and the like. Nor can the modus, or manner of it, be conceived. The date of it, *to-day*, designs eternity, as in Isa. xliii. 13, which is one continued day, an everlasting now; and this may be applied to any time or case, in which Christ is declared to be the Son of God; as at his incarnation, his baptism, his transfiguration on the mount, and his resurrection from the dead, as in Acts xiii. 33, see Rom. i. 4, and at his ascension to heaven, when he was made both Lord and Christ, and his divine Sonship more manifestly appeared; which seems to be the time and case more especially referred to here."

Dr. Guyse, on Heb. i. 5, says, "In the former part of this verse, God the Father speaks of what he had already done in begetting his Son; but in this last clause he speaks of what he would be to him. Accordingly, I take the *former* of these to relate to his *natural Sonship* by an eternal inconceivable generation, which was manifested by his resurrection, and the *second*, to his Father's *acknowledgment and treatment* of him as his *incarnate Son and Mediator*, and so the argument for the superior dignity of his person proceeds in this verse from his divine to his office character, and from thence to both these considerations of him jointly." (verses 6-9.)

These quotations, perhaps, are sufficient to support the view I have advanced. More might be easily added, but space forbids. My principal reason for giving them is in respect of the *tenses*. A learned critic observes upon Mic. v. 2: "The act of *coming forth* is expressed as *eternally acting*. The verbal noun implies the *present;* the other words, *that present to be eternal*." The same author, in speaking on Ps. ii. 7, says: "Hence his generation is spoken of as a permanent thing, of which it ever hath been, is, and will be said, '*This day have I begotten thee;*' or as it has been rendered, '*I am this day begetting thee,*' to denote an eternal, abiding, unbeginning, and never-ending act. The Hebrew is, and should be rendered, *Jehovah hath said to me, thou art my Son, I am this day generating thee.* For, 1. That which can be *now* said to be done *this* day, and might be so said *yesterday*, and may be said to *morrow*, and so on from eternity to eternity, if it could be spoken of any human act, would determine such act to be always acting, never acted; and therefore would oblige us to alter the expression, and say, *doing* in the present, instead of *done* in the preter tense. And

Digitized by Google

therefore, since this is spoken here of an *eternal Being*, since God himself said *so long since*, and *still* saith, and always *will* say,——I——*this day*,—— even the meanest capacity will agree, that whatever act this is, which is thus spoken of, must be *always acting*, never *acted*, and therefore that the word, denoting this action, ought to be expressed in the present tense, and not in the preter, *I am this day generating thee.* 2. This is according to the *Hebrew* idiom, which has no present tense, but expresses it, sometimes by the preter, and sometimes by the future; and this the *Rabbins* themselves allow. Now, hence we must infer, 1. That there is in the Deity, *Father and Son*, two *distinct persons*, each completed by his proper subsistence; the Father is generating the Son; the Son is receiving his generation from the Father. 2. This act, if I may call it an act, being said to be *acting*, not *acted*, we cannot hence infer that the nature of the Father is divided, or another nature produced. And consequently, the Son of God, with respect to this generating, cannot be said to be a *divided Being.* 3. That the *Father* and the *Son* in the *Deity* are *co-eternal* and *equally self-existent* and independent." Coward Lectures, pp. 196, 197. Ed. 1729.

Thus, I hope, I have established my point,—that the *grammatical* construction of those Scriptures referring to the eternal Sonship of Christ, *if fairly received*, would prevent much misconception of this great truth, and I think it would also help to solve the difficulties of the controversy.

The reader may also observe that in the Appendix to my Sermons on the Unsearchable Riches of Christ, I made some remarks in defence of *the term* Eternal Generation as applied to the Sonship of Christ, and in the quotation given from the Rev. P. McLaren's writings, it will be seen that the argument there mainly rests upon what I have here endeavoured to point out, *a question of grammar*; so that that quotation, and these now presented, show the importance of the principle laid down by Dr. Chalmers. The whole question of Christ's Sonship, though pre-eminently theological, is, to a great extent, unquestionably metaphysical, that is, having relation to the first principles of thought, and therefore must be determined by the grammar of the language in which the Scriptures were originally written.

GADSBY AND ARNOLD, PRINTERS, CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

THE CHERUBIM OF GLORY
OVERSHADOWING THE MERCY SEAT,
AND
BEHOLDING THE PROPITIATORY.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Wednesday Evening, October 16th, 1868.

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

"And over it (the ark of the covenant) the cherubims of glory overshadowing the mercy seat."—HEBREWS IX. 5.

SIMILITUDES, metaphors, types and shadows, abound in the word of God, and form one of its most peculiar features; they contain so much of the wisdom of a divine revelation that no earnest Christian should neglect obtaining some knowledge of them. They differ altogether from the mythological learning which the world has produced; for in studying scripture tropology the mind becomes elevated and deeply imbued with the knowledge of God; but heathen mythology seldom fails to debase the mind of its reader and to spread its poison through every faculty of the soul. Infidel writers evidently scoff at the figurative language of scripture, for they have not scrupled to censure the apostle Paul for explaining it; and even amongst the writers and preachers of natural religion few appear to know much about its types and figures, or show any regard as to what they are designed to teach. This is not much to be wondered at when we consider what the Holy Ghost has declared by the mouth of the apostle Paul (1 Cor. ii. 14): "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." For my part, I consider that to be ignorant of these things is to be ignorant of divine truth, for in them God speaks to his servants; his mind, the thoughts of his heart are thereby revealed, and when under the

Digitized by Google

teachings of his Spirit their import is discovered, much strength and beauty is felt and perceived in the truth thus communicated. Indeed, my belief is, that an inexhaustible fountain of divine wisdom lies concealed within the sacred emblematical figures of the scripturesof truth, especially those of the cherubim and *sanctum sanctorum* of the Mosaic economy, showing to spiritual believers and strongly setting forth the important doctrine of a Triune Jehovah in all the work of man's redemption as accomplished by the divine and eternal Son of God.

With regard to the cherubim of glory spoken of in our text, their symbolical representation has not, I think, been clearly understood; no, not even by some of those whom we deem men of truth, for their explanations are contradictory, and to my mind unsatisfactory. Some have asserted, holy angels to be the mystical meaning, as Bunyan, Witsius, and many more of equal rank and fame; the posture of stooping, it is said, indicates their looking into the mysteries of redemption by Jesus Christ. This notion seems to have been suggested from the language of Peter, "Which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter i. 12); but this idea, I apprehend, has no real foundation, for no reference is there made either to the cherubim or to the propitiatory blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat. Besides, the making of any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above is expressly forbidden. (Exodus xx. 2.)* It is not in the nature of God to say and unsay himself in the revelation of his will to his creatures, and though the making of the cherubim as forming part of the mercy seat in the holy of holies was divinely authorised, yet I believe, and I hope shortly to show, that the design was for a very different purpose. Another esteemed author, the late Rev. R. M. McCheyne, of Dundee, tells us, "It is now generally agreed by interpreters that the cherubims were emblems of the church redeemed in heaven." Who these interpreters are it is not said, nor have I been able to ascertain, except in one instance, but I confess I was at first much taken with that opinion. He says: "1. They were of one piece with the mercy seat, even as the church is united to Christ. 2. They stood upon the mercy seat sprinkled with blood; they have no other standing. The

* "The Rhemists in their annotations on this place (Heb. ix. 5) do justify the setting up of images in churches from this instance." —*Dr. Guyse, loco.*

Digitized by Google

blood that was sprinkled on the mercy seat sprinkled them also. 3. They gazed down upon the mercy seat even as the redeemed shall spend eternity in beholding that amazing propitiatory which brought glory to God in the highest and peace to guilty man. 4. They are the dwelling-place of God. 5. They sing, Thou hast redeemed us." All this seemed very plausible, and I verily thought that the true light now shineth on this mysterious subject; still I met with difficulties the more I pondered over the thoughts of this good man, though I think I obtained a clue by which I have arrived at what I now believe to be the mind of the Spirit. I was led to reflect that as the inner material of the mercy seat was of wood, and was emblematic of the human nature of the Redeemer, and the outer material being of pure gold, signified his divine nature, so in like manner the cherubim being all of one piece of metal with the mercy seat this would be emblematic of, and set forth the unity of the divine attributes of Jehovah beholding with complacency and satisfaction the blood of the God-man Mediator sprinkled upon the mercy seat. (Psalm lxxxv. 10.) The cherubim one with the mercy seat; the Triune Jehovah in holy covenant, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, equally engaged and equally concurring in the shedding of blood for the remission of sins. It is the divine mind, or presence, that is here symbolised, not the form or image of Jehovah in his Trinity of Persons; *that* must not be imagined, for it is a state or condition of mind and feeling, and not a substance that is represented; and if I might so say—it sets forth a state of reconciliation effected by the propitiatory, the divine attributes harmonising in the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God for the redemption of his people. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven." This is the view I now take of the cherubic mystery in the holy of holies, and the more I reflect upon it the more I feel confirmed in it. I may just mention that on one occasion I met, in a bookshop, with a Christian Jew, a preacher of the gospel. I asked him the meaning of the word cherubim, and whether it was a noun or a verb? Taking up a Hebrew lexicon and looking at the word, he replied, "It is a *verb*, not a noun; it signifies *motion*, not a creation; the act is bowing or beholding." I then felt convinced that the two ordinary in-

Digitized by Google

terpretations were incorrect, or at least imperfect, being founded on an image of something created. Thus by a gradual process my mind has been led to adopt the view which is here presented.

The Cherubic figure was a conspicuous feature of the Levitical Tabernacle. Of the form or shape, Moses has said nothing, but we find from Exodus xxv. 18-20, he was to make out of one and the same mass of pure gold a cover or lid for the ark of the covenant with two cherubims, one at each end of the mercy seat, standing in a stooping attitude, looking toward it, while they overshadowed it with their expanded wings. This posture gave to the whole work, viz. the ark, the mercy seat with its crown, and the cherubim, the form of a seat with a canopy or covering, representing the Throne of God, and was emblematic of his wisdom, love, justice, and power; or, in other words, of the glorious person and work of Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Evidently the Cherubim were mystical figures of the highest antiquity and of great signification. Those of Eden, the Tabernacle, of Isaiah's and of Ezekiel's visions all belong to the same original. The place they had in the holy of holies and their use sets them very high. Their appellation, as in our text, the cherubim of glory, does the same; indeed, it was the consideration of this that led me to suspect they could not mean either angels or the church in heaven; and the reasoning of the apostle, from the shadows of the law to the priesthood of Christ, who with his own blood has passed into heaven itself there to appear in the presence of God for us, sets the cherubim highest of all, leading us to infer without a doubt that they were symbolical of the unity of the attributes of the divine nature.*

By consulting Lev. xvi. 2 we find that the mercy seat was *over*, *upon*, or *above* the ark. Here was seen, on the great day of atonement, the manifestation of Jehovah's presence, the cloud of glory (a bright cloud irradiating the space above and between the cherubim), which was a well-known symbol of the divine presence. In v. 13 the mercy seat is said to be upon the testimony, "the

* Since this sermon was preached the author has had the opportunity of seeing several interesting treatises on the cherubim. Hutchinson, Parkhurst, Hodges, Bate, W. Jones, and Relly hold in substance nearly the same opinion as has been expressed above.

Digitized by Google

HeDuth (says the learned Dr. Walter Hodges) plural, the interpretation of which is in this place, I think, *witnesses*, the representative emblems which were at each end of the ark, so under the mercy seat, as joint supporters of it." Hereby it is plainly, though emblematically, signified that all the divine persons or covenanters were the foundation of the grand scheme of redemption, and were equally engaged, or engaged themselves to support it, though the second person was illustriously distinguished in both his natures upon the mercy seat by a more particular representation, as he was the hero, the great captain of his people's salvation in this most astonishing work of wisdom, love, and mercy.

It may be as well to notice a few particulars of the cherubic mystery as hinted at in the scriptures. The first symbol was the tree of life, or tree of *the living ones*. On man being expelled the garden of Eden, a change of the symbol was made, representing the wrath of God against sin and the punishment due to it by cherubic *faces* and a flame, or appearance of fire in continual circulation, to keep the way of the tree of the living ones. Thus man in his natural state is represented as being debarred from entering in where the tree of life is to be found. God in his own pure essence is a consuming fire to every sinner seeking life and salvation without the atoning blood of Christ, or upon the footing of his own creature righteousness. In the Levitical *sanctum sanctorum*, cherubic faces are represented, and the appearance or manifestation of Jehovah's presence is promised upon the presentation of blood offered in sacrifice for sin. The veil of this inner chamber was also made with the figure of the cherubim. (Exod. 26-31.) These figures were what was called the testimony of *witnesses*. (Verse 34.) Again, in xvi. 33, 34, Aaron is to take a pot of manna and lay it up before the Lord (or to the faces of Jehovah). Then follows, "As Jehovah commandeth Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the testimony" (or to the faces of the witnesses); the Holy Ghost thereby plainly teaching us that "before Jehovah" and "before the testimony" are meant the same thing: and because of the answers given from between the cherubim, the divine presence was said *to dwell* there or *inhabit* between. (Ps. lxxx. 1.) The manifested glory between the cherubim and over the mercy seat showed that the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in the economy of redemption was "honourable and

Digitized by Google

glorious," and divinely accepted and approved; the cloud of glory being between the cherubim they are called by the apostle Paul the cherubim of glory.

In the temple made by Solomon we find that within the inner chamber, the *sanctum sanctorum*, he placed two colossal cherubim made of olive tree and overlaid with gold; the extreme tip of their wings stretched out touched the wall of each end of the chamber, and their wings bowing opposite each other touched each other, forming a canopy, beneath which stood the ark of the testimony with the cherubim of gold as made by Moses. And even the outer walls of this chamber were carved with cherubic figures, and palm trees, and open flowers, all of which were doubtless emblematic of the divine presence, sacred peace, and divine wrath appeased; palms being symbolical of peace, or, as I am disposed to think, of the tree of life in Eden, and sweet scented flowers, as it is said, to assuage anger. I have read somewhere that the wings of the cherubim touching each other set forth the sympathy of angels with believers, but I think this thought carries no weight; it may be a pretty idea, but is not the true one. I rather think the meaning to be the *mutual concurrence* of the GREAT ONES; their mutual concurrence in the great transaction of redemption, and mutual approbation of the propitiatory; the manifold wisdom of God, the holiness of his justice, the majesty of his power, all concurring with unmixed satisfaction and delight in witnessing to the blood of sprinkling as the divine propitiatory by which sinners are reconciled and brought again into the presence of Jehovah. The attributes of Jehovah, like the wings of the cherubim, spread over and cover the atoning blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, the language of which is as described by the Psalmist, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is COVERED." (Ps. xxxii. 1.) Covered by the presence between the cherubim, and by the overshadowing of the cherubim; thus "Jehovah beholds no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel."

The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel had each visions of the cherubim; and Ezekiel, as his manner is, minutely describes all that he beholds; he distinguishes everything in its smallest parts, everything is dressed in symbolical *actions*. Figures are borrowed from creation, in order to describe the scene in its most noble forms. Men, oxen, lions, and eagles support the chariot throne of God, to set

Digitized by Google

forth the dignity, power, elevation, and majesty of the divine appearance or manifestations, of the unity and universality of his government in heaven and on earth, and his goings forth in the economy of redemption. Yet who of us have not found, that though Ezekiel's vision is replete with wonders, exalted and sublime beyond degree, yet the scene he exhibits is far from making the same deep and heart-striking impression with that of Isaiah? The short description of his vision leaves a deeper impression than that of Ezekiel's, though it is more graphic and minute. Ezekiel's strikes our imagination with wonder, but the impression fades away. That of Isaiah affects the heart and conscience, the sense of which cannot be easily forgotten. "Woe is *me, I am* undone." Ezekiel shows us something of heaven, but Isaiah brings us to God at once. With Ezekiel's vision, the brightness of the fire, the restless wheels, and the moving wings, we are amazed, dazzled, and confounded; but with Isaiah's we are solemnised, humbled, and silenced. Still I make no question that the cherubim which Ezekiel's represents, are complete, sublime, and majestic symbols of the divine manifestations, perfections, and movements in the accomplishment of Jehovah's will on earth as it is in heaven. God's providential dispensations and the ministrations of his redeeming grace, when surveyed by a spiritual mind, will be found to be marked with all the peculiar characteristics which the prophet has so luminously described: his description of the cherubim, be it remembered, is emblematic of action and qualities or attributes; not of the shapes or forms of things created, that is to say, not of any order of angelic or other heavenly being; for we must keep in mind the word "cherubim" is a verb, an action; not a noun, not a creation. Still less are we to imagine that they represent the configuration or number of the persons of the divine and glorious Trinity;* for, as already stated, the making of an

* Mr. Hutchinson, in his learned work on the cherubim, and Mr. Parkhurst, in his Hebrew Lexicon, have each given an engraving of the cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat, which I regard as somewhat objectionable; because, 1. *Printing* the similitude of Jehovah in covenant is as likely to prove corrupting and carnalising as *making* a graven image. 2. The representation is incorrect. Four distinct *heads* are pictured, whereas the Scripture speaks of *faces* only. 3. The engraving also represents the cherubim to be *standing* upright, with these heads *looking* down, whereas the Eastern posture of bowing is the incurvation of the

Digitized by Google

image of any heavenly being is solemnly forbidden, and therefore would not be sanctioned or permitted. "Take ye, therefore, good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire; lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure." (Deut. iv. 15, 16.) So that the description of the appearance of faces, wings, feet, and hands are not to be regarded as representing the personal form of Him whom no man hath seen or can see; but they are to be understood as emblematic characteristics of Jehovah's government in the ordering of his providence and the operations of his love and grace in the hearts of his redeemed people; all which display the glory of the divine perfections as comprised in the triple repeated word "holy," in the vision of Isaiah—namely, truth, purity, love, goodness, wisdom, justice, and power.*

We have also the cherubim represented in the book of the Revelation. In the fourth chapter they are improperly called beasts; *the living ones* it should be; these are said to be full of eyes within, before, and behind. This is an additional description to that given by Ezekiel.† Here they represent neither the persons or manifestation of Jehovah, for they unite with all the heavenly hosts in paying worship to him. (Verses 8–11.) Nor can they represent angels, for in v. 9, they, with the elders, give thanks and honour unto the Lamb on the throne for their redemption to God by his blood;‡ it is evident, therefore,

body, by which, with the spreading over of the wings, the cherubim formed a regal canopy or covering over the mercy seat, as symbolical of the throne of Jehovah in heaven.

* I am aware that Drs. Goodwin, Gill, Kitto, and others have written very ingeniously upon the cherubim, as setting forth holy angels and qualities in gospel ministers. I do not entirely dissent from some of their views; but, with all due deference to these learned authors, I would ask, Is it not rising a little higher in the region of truth to suppose that Ezekiel sets forth what God *is* and what God *does*, rather than what the gospel ministry should be? Still there can be no objection to taking the views of those good men as *subordinate* and *secondary* to that which is more expansive and exalting, as given by the prophet.

† This answers to the four faces of Ezekiel's cherubim, which would thus be full of eyes, before and behind.

‡ Dr. Cooke, in his dissertation on the cherubim, referring to this text, thinks that the relative pronoun "they" does not include the living creatures engaged in the song of redemption, but only uniting in giving an adoring response.—*Cooke on the Shekinah*, p. 392.

Digitized by Google

in my opinion, that in the book of Revelation, as in the writings of Moses and the prophets, it is not the form or shape of any living being in heaven, but the nature or state of being that is intended. To be full of eyes within, before, and behind, symbolises all sense, all intellect, all consciousness, turning attention every way—the power of beholding all at once all things within the reach of the understanding, discerning them with a clearness of perception which is the most perfect created semblance of the intuitive and boundless view of the omniscient mind. In John's vision the glorified state of Christ's redeemed in heaven seems to be foreshadowed and symbolised by the cherubic figure. The glorified will no longer be limited in their sight as now; every faculty of the soul will be increased and perfected. They will serve God with superior and enlarged reason, with great strength of affection, with powerful and energetic perseverance, and with swift, animated, and unabating obedience adapted to the heavenly and exalted condition to which they are raised; qualities and characteristics which seem to be signified by the emblem there used.

I hope I have made myself understood on this deeply interesting subject. We shall do well to give it a little closer study. God hath given us his written word. May he open our eyes, that we behold wondrous things therein, and may he give us to feel that we have a personal interest in the things which he reveals!

We must now return to the cherubim over the mercy seat. From this grand hieroglyphic, emblematical of the presence of THE GREAT ONES,* I therefore conclude that the ark, the cherubim, and the glory manifested in the *sanctum sanctorum*, on the presentation and sprinkling of the sacrificial and substitutionary blood upon the mercy seat, were mystical exhibitions of those great and eternal realities that had been originated in the high court of heaven, and of what was to be there completed by Jehovah in his Trinity of Persons, the eternal Covenanters, on behalf of the church of God, who are redeemed from among men. By the stratagem of Satan, the enemy of God, his Christ, and his church, the human race was plunged from its original state of innocence, goodness, and happiness into a state of sin, guilt, misery,

* Moses speaks of the cherubim throughout as of living persons, the likeness of the GREAT ONES.

Digitized by Google

and death; made captives by him at his will, and inevitably banished from the presence of Jehovah. But ere time or nature had a beginning, the eternal Covenanters, Father, Son, and Spirit, had determined on the choice of a certain and specified number to be everlastingly saved from all the evil of their powerful enemies—Satan, sin, death, and hell. The great scheme originated in the mind of Jehovah, in the Person of the Father, who sent his only begotten Son into the world that his chosen ones should live through him. The Son of God became their Surety, he took their law place and stead; he took their nature into union with himself, and by imputation, their sin, so that in his Person, as their representative and substitute, their sin should be punished, and the full penalty of it be exacted, and thus he became their propitiation, an eternal covering. By virtue of this covenant, the Holy Ghost becomes the administrator on earth to the person of every one thus covenanted for; by him the good work of grace is commenced in the heart, maintained and completed until the great day of Christ. And until the salvation of the whole of God's elect family is perfectly consummated, the Son of God, as the High Priest of our profession, appears in heaven as our Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate; as the King of glory he has sat down on the throne of the Majesty on high, until all his foes shall be made his footstool. When all this is accomplished, then will be celebrated the marriage supper of the Lamb. The whole church of God will be congregated around the throne, rejoicing, and exclaiming, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." All the heavenly host shall join, saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Then the four living ones shall unite in giving a confirming response by adding their solemn AMEN. What the splendour of this magnificent scene will be, is impossible for any mortal to depict or imagine. The enthronisation of the Lamb of God is revealed to us in symbolical representations, because the human mind, in its present state, is incompetent to conceive the greatness of Immanuel's glory; his work is honourable and glorious, his glory is great in the salvation of his church, for honour and majesty is laid upon him. The glorified

Digitized by Google

saints shall be eye witnesses of his glory, and shall share an eternity of bliss. May we not say, then, with the poet:

> "On wings of faith mount up, my soul, and rise,
> View thine inheritance beyond the skies;
> Nor heart can think nor mortal tongue can tell
> What endless pleasures in those mansions dwell;
> There our Redeemer lives, all bright and glorious,
> O'er sin, and death, and hell he reigns victorious."

Brethren! what shall we say to these things? To what practical issue can we bring them? Do they not intimately concern you and me? Most certainly they do. If we have no personal interest in those great transactions as set forth in the symbol of the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, we are of all men the most miserable. The things of which we speak are not speculative or theoretical opinions and fancies, but are of that practical nature that nothing less than an experimental participation in them must be realised and enjoyed before the wounded conscience of the seeking sinner can find rest, ease and peace. It is admitted "all men are sinners," that none can forgive sins but God—and if he should be strict to mark iniquity who should stand; yet there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared, but without shedding of blood there is no remission. Forgiveness of sin is founded on a complete satisfaction being made for it. There must be a propitiation. There can be no reconciliation without atonement. What if the sinner pays the penalty himself, yet no atonement is made to God, nor can he be saved, for the penalty is his punishment, and his sin remains unforgiven. For him to be saved, his sins forgiven, and he reconciled to God, a substitutionary death must be offered and accepted. With men this was impossible, but with God it was possible; and this hath actually been done in the person of Jesus Christ the Son of God. For his sake the believing sinner is forgiven and justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. For God to mark iniquity in the sinner and to provide salvation for him, would be altogether inconsistent and impossible; yet how often this thought takes hold of the newly awakened sinner, how can God be just and pardon sin? But God has marked sin, though not *in* the believer, but *for* the believer, *in* the person of his own dear Son; the believer is saved by *his* death and by *his* life; by his death, a sacrifice was made, an atonement constituted and a propitiation effected; by his life the right-

Digitized by Google

eousness of the law was fulfilled and honoured, which is imputed unto all, and is upon all them that believe in him. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) Thus the sinner that was in captivity to the law of sin and death is ransomed by the precious blood of Christ; the price of redemption, and the power by which it was obtained, flow through the atonement; hence it is said, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin." Thus God's holiness is vindicated, the majesty of the law is honoured, sin is fully punished and the sinner righteously saved. This is the method of salvation as revealed in the Scriptures of truth; there we see it is well established that all sin which is forgiven must be through the blood of atonement. No sinner can hope for forgiveness but through the atoning blood of Christ. If sinners are to have any experience in their own conscience of pardon and peace, they must rely on the merit of that blood as an all-sufficient atonement and an everlasting propitiation. Hence, a promise of pardon is made, and is held out to every sinner feeling his guilt, and seeking remission in the way of God's appointment: it is revealed to the believer, and the application of this mercy is made by the Holy Ghost. This hope in the gospel which is set before us must be sought for and laid hold of by those who feel the burden of sin and its exceeding sinfulness: it is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast: it is the door of God's mercy opened by the hand of justice itself for the encouragement of anxious, timid, doubting, fearing souls; this door will never be shut until the last elect vessel of mercy shall have found its way to the Saviour.

> "The door of his mercy stands open all day
> To the poor and the needy who knock by the way;
> No sinner shall ever be empty sent back
> Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus's sake."

"Ah!" says one, "I have been seeking pardon and peace many times, everywhere, and a long while; but have not realised what I so much desire. Sometimes I've thought I am all wrong, sometimes tempted to think that the Bible is not true upon this matter. Indeed! but are you quite sure that you have been seeking pardon in the right way? It may be you have been counting upon some merit you suppose you comparatively possess; urging, possibly, some plea of your own as your own mere misery, &c.;

Digitized by Google

or it may be you have placed a dependence on the means of grace rather than on the God of grace; coming to God and coming to the means of grace are two very different things. Perhaps you may have come to the means of grace with a *depressed* spirit, but not to God with a *broken heart* and a contrite spirit; or you may have been more anxious to have *your sins forgiven* than to have *your hearts cleansed* from the defilement of sin; more anxious for *peace* than for *purity*, that is, more anxious to be delivered from the terrors of the law than to be made meet for heaven; or perhaps you may have been led to rely upon your supposed faith, hope, or love, and thought peace would flow in through such a source. Many have been led by a false or imperfect understanding to make a Christ of their faith, their hope, or their love; but they are miserably mistaken. Christ is the object of our faith; but no act of faith, hope, or love can save a soul; they are the things that accompany salvation; pardon and peace comes to the seeking sinner through what Christ has done for us, not from what the Holy Spirit may have wrought within us. The blood of Christ is the sinner's only plea, not our misery, nor our sins; no, nor yet the bestowment of his gifts; they are gracious evidences truly, but they were never intended to be used as pleas, or to be the source of our peace. On the other hand, I have often seen persons under great concern about their sin, wretched and miserable beyond degree; but O what kind of concern was it? what was it that made them so miserable? It was not what they had done, but it was because they were 'found out;' their sin had indeed brought them into trouble, but with the sin itself they had no quarrel; their unhappiness had arisen from the loss of their good name and the place they once had in society. Now when the Holy Ghost begins his work in the heart, sin is the first thing the sinner falls out with; he hates it bitterly and hates himself for it, and has no rest until it is purged from the conscience. Now, you who think you have been seeking pardon and peace, but have not found it, and are ready to impute the fault everywhere but in yourself, think these things over, search and try yourself; you may not be the false professor which I have pointed out, but it may be you have been deceived, or at least misunderstood the method of grace. If the Holy Ghost has wounded you, he will surely heal you; he will lead you to the blood of sprinkling; he will show you that the sprinkled blood upon the mercy seat has been

Digitized by Google

accepted on your behalf; the cherubim of glory overshadow it, the Holy Ghost will witness with your spirit that all your sins are pardoned, for Christ has died, and you shall know "the blessedness of him whose transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered."

But now let us turn our attention to the Person of Him who has entered the holy of holies. The scene within the veil is awfully solemn and momentous; it represents the presence of God in his own essential glory and immutable perfections. The great business to be transacted is the salvation of his people; an atonement for sin is to be presented, and a divine acceptance is to be manifested. We see, dressed in garments clean and white, the High Priest, wearing upon his breast a plate of precious sparkling gems, on which is inscribed the names of the people for whom he acts and represents. He enters alone, for he only can dare venture into the sacred precincts; and not without burning incense lest he die; nor yet without blood, for without shedding of blood there is no remission. This blood is the blood of others, of bulls and of goats, upon whose heads the sins of the people have been confessed. This blood, therefore, represents sacrifice for sin by substitution. He, the High Priest, stands before the golden throne, as the *Mediator* between God and man; not as their substitute, in his own Person, for that is represented in the blood he has brought with him; nor as their intercessor, for that is set forth in the burning incense. He sprinkles the blood upon the mercy-seat, and the smoking cloud from the burning incense immediately covers it. The shekinah, or cloud of glory, is manifested between the cherubim as the divine acceptance and approval of the blood of propitiation, thus the blood spilt for sin is divinely covered, and is no more seen. Here, then, we see in these various complex figures types and symbols of human redemption, the Person and work of the great High Priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Mediator of the new covenant, who in his own Person comprises the priesthood, sacrifice, and incense. He is the substitute of sinners, their advocate and intercessor, who by his own blood has entered the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for his people, and having an unchangeable priesthood; and who by his one offering hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified. We see in the construction of the mercy-seat, the golden cover, or lid, with its crown of

Digitized by Google

gold, enclosing the lid made of wood, that which sets forth the complexity of the Person of Christ the Son of God. He took our humanity into personal union with himself. The cherubim being of the same piece with the mercy seat sets forth the unity of the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead divinely supporting and upholding the mercy-seat; the divine perfections were set forth in the mystic fourfold faces of the cherubim; their overspreading wings and their bending attitude over the blood of sprinkling signified, as before stated, their mutual approbation, and satisfaction with the blood of the covenant. The ark of the covenant, containing the Tables of the Law, with its *crowned* mercy-seat, and sprinkled with the blood, betokened the Son of God, the *King of glory*, in our nature, having taken our sin, it being laid upon him; the blood, the life of the substitute, was taken by him for us; it was shed for sinners—sin was expiated both by sprinkling and the acceptance, hence it became the propitiatory, and a throne of mercy or grace. Sin is no longer imputed to those for whom the blood was shed, for the transgression is forgiven because it is punished in the Person of the Mediator and substitute. The sin for which the blood was shed can no more be seen; for it is covered both by the advocacy of the Redeemer and the testimony of divine approbation.

It may, perhaps, be expected that something should be said as to what was symbolised more particularly by the compound figure of the cherubim, their fourfold faces, their being full of eyes, and the number of their wings; but very little more that is really profitable can be added, though it would be easy enough to say much if we were to enter upon Ezekiel's vision, let therefore a few words suffice. No doubt the cherubim which Moses made were of the same appearance as those which kept the way of the tree of life, and those which Solomon made, and those which Ezekiel and the apostle John beheld, though Moses did not describe their particular form, the omission of which seems to imply that their form was well known and their signification well understood at that time. My impression is, the *faces* represented the Personalities of Jehovah *in all the views* that can be conceived concerning man's redemption. Face and person are synonymous terms, this is well known: but observe, the *number* of faces are not to represent the

Digitized by Google

number of *Persons;* that is not what is meant. Neither do I use the word *heads;* it is not so said in Scripture, though most writers have done so. If we read Ezek. i. 10, we shall find the face of a man *in the front*, the face of a lion on *the right side*, the face of an ox on *the left side*, and the face of an eagle *at the back*. This appears to be the plain meaning of the words as they stand. Thus these faces would be seen full of eyes, before and behind. As the cherubim stood at each end of the mercy-seat opposite each other, the four different faces would be presented to the high priest as he entered the *sanctum sanctorum*. He would have a view of the full face of the lion on the one side, and of the ox on the other, also of the right and left side-faces of the eagle and of the man. Their being full of eyes, before and behind, appears to me to represent the omniscience of the Godhead.* The four wings were doubtless significant —two were for vesture, and the other two were stretched upwards, but on their stooping to behold the propitiatory blood, their wings would meet over each other, combining, as I have said before, a regal canopy over the golden throne. The faces would picture the peculiar parts which the threefold personality in Jehovah exhibit in the covenant of grace. The *Bull* is an emblem of fire, as fire is of wrath; the first Person demands satisfaction for sin, and by this emblem, fire devoured the sacrifice, the figure of the sufferings and death of Christ. The *Lion* is an emblem of light, as light is of life; the second Person, by his humanity, fed the fire until he was consumed; when the fire was satisfied then it expired. The person of Christ, the God-man, by his death, conquered death and restored life to man, and thus he is the life and the light of men. The *Eagle* is an emblem of air or spirit, by the inspiration or breath of which man inspires and breathes forth. The Holy Spirit breathes celestial life in the soul. He supports and maintains it, and meetens the believer for heavenly glory.† Their wings

* If this idea be correct, it must, I think, be fatal to the scheme of those who hold that the cherubic figure set forth angels, or the Church of God in heaven. The attributes of Jehovah cannot be separated from the personalities of his being, though a separate symbol is used to set forth one in particular.

† In heathen mythology, which is more or less derived from the patriarchal symbolic figures, the faces of the Lion, Bull, Eagle,

Digitized by Google

meeting each other as they overshadow the mercy-seat, as I have repeatedly said, denote the divine attributes, mercy, truth, righteousness, peace, wisdom, power, and love, all joining in consent and harmony in the great work of a full and completed salvation. The divine attributes thus meeting together form a canopy of divine glory over the mercy-seat or throne of grace to which the humble suppliant may now approach without dread and fear; for until the sacrifice was accepted, the throne of the divine Majesty was a "seat of dreadful wrath and shot-devouring flame;" but now it is a throne of grace, a glorious high throne—"a glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." (Jer. xvii. 12.) It is the seeking sinner's only refuge; it is the only place where mercy can be administered, and the believer find pardon and peace. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, at this time, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 24–26.)

"Mercy and truth on earth are met,
Since Christ the Lord came down from heaven;
By his obedience so complete,
Justice is pleased, and peace is given."

Thus we have set before us in the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat the great transactions in the council of heaven by the eternal three-one Jehovah to the view of man on earth. It is an hieroglyphical picture of the covenant of grace and the parties concerned in it. The wisdom, goodness, and justice of God are here transcendantly displayed in the punishment of sin and the justification of the redeemed sinner. It centres in the glorious person and substitutionary work of his Son Jesus Christ; in him all the rays of the Godhead meet and shine, for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; by him, in a sinless humanity, the law of God is perfectly fulfilled, magnified, and made honourable; by his death his

&c., are well known to be emblematic of qualities or character; and however fanciful it may appear, the same figures as employed in Scripture must be understood in like manner. Our concern is with *the truth* that is presented, not the figure itself.

Digitized by Google

people's transgression is forgiven and their sin is covered, for his blood is a full atonement and is the propitiation. What a complete, full, and satisfactory answer can be given to that most important question which a sinner asks when first awakened to the danger of his sin. "Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, or bow myself before the most high?" Until the answer is heard in the court of the sinner's conscience, he feels the impossibility of his being justified before God on the ground of his own obedience to divine law, for he is already a sinner, was born in sin, has lived in sin, and is already under condemnation. This revelation of the law in the soul is commonly called a law work, for by the law is the knowledge of sin, and while this law work is going on there can be no peace, for the law not only demands perfect obedience, but it also demands a complete satisfaction, the death of the sinner. None can live on the terms of God's holy law, for it is broken, and all hope of being justified before God by any act of the sinner is utterly taken away; there is no escape but in the method of grace which the gospel reveals; here is a disclosure of God's mercy to fallen man upon such a footing as enables the guilty sinner seeking salvation to hope for forgiveness and to be accepted before God for ever. "Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" by which we are to understand his active and passive obedience to the law of God in the room and stead of his people; this obediential righteousness being received by faith in Jesus Christ, faith in his life, as well as in his death, is by the gracious constitution of God in the gospel, imputed to, reckoned, made over, and placed to the forgiven sinner's account, as though he had actually wrought it out himself and had never sinned. The law has now no demand upon him; he is made free from it, and stands complete in Christ. Judicially considered, he is sinless, or in other words, righteous. The righteousness of Christ is a glorious robe covering every member of his mystical body the church; and "therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."

Let us, in conclusion, notice some of the precious blessings arising out of the great facts set forth by the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, or, in other

Digitized by Google

words, "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Mercy and truth are met together in the person of Christ the Son of God; righteousness and peace have kissed each other; this is realised in the sinner's conscience; what a happy meeting, God and sinners reconciled! The first blessing is, *The gift of the Holy Ghost.* Jesus, having finished the work which his Father had given him to do, hath ascended upon high, and hath for ever sat down on the throne of his majesty with his Father; the Father sends the Spirit in the name of his Son to testify of these things to every member of the redeemed family; by him they are quickened, renewed in the spirit of their mind, called out of nature's darkness into its marvellous light, and manifested to be the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 2. *The way unto the Father is opened by the Son.* What an encouragement to every returning penitent sinner; every obstacle is taken out of the way, no price in his hand is wanted, the price is paid; no righteousness of the creature is required, for an everlasting righteousness is wrought out and brought in, so that there is forgiveness with God that he may be feared and that the sinner may live in his sight. 3. *A free access is opened up to all the saints.* Here at this throne of glory they may have converse with the great I AM, the eternal three-one Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; here the saints may pour out their hearts before God, and here each person of the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity reveals his love to them; here what blessed communications of divine truth are made to the understanding; here it is they grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Saviour Jesus Christ; thus it is they live by faith on the Son of God, living daily on his fulness, receiving grace upon grace, and daily experiencing the Spirit's renewing grace. 4. *A sure ground for hope is revealed.* Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God; to be assured of everlasting felicity in the presence of him where there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore; to have a share of that heavenly glory by the gift of Christ which he himself had with the Father before the world was: what a glorious expectation for every saint whilst passing through much tribulation, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the

Digitized by Google

things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." What a theme for eternal rejoicing shall we have when arrayed in robes made white by the blood of the Lamb; with palms of victory in our hands, we shall sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Finally. From the vast undertaking that is here represented in the redemption of sinners, what an invaluable price, what a tremendous cost, is the ransom that has been paid, and what an Almighty power has been exercised to accomplish it. Hence we learn how great is the demerit of sin, its exceeding sinfulness. How can the believer love sin? how can he live in it? how shall he, if he be dead to sin, live any longer therein? He cannot, he will not, he must not. Oh, if any of you are not walking after the Spirit, you are not living in the Spirit, but are walking after the flesh; and if so, you are still under condemnation, not being in Christ Jesus; for they that are in Christ Jesus are new creatures; old things are passed away, all things are become new. Let, then, this thought press on the conscience of every one who names the name of Christ as a professing member of his mystical body, more especially the formalist and the secret backslider, and also the ungodly; let them beware how they slight and contemn the great doctrines of the gospel, salvation by grace, the substitutionary work of the Son of God, and the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, for "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

NOTE.

In Ezekiel, ch. xxviii., the Prince of Tyre is spoken of under the figure of an "anointed cherubim—a covering cherubim." The figure is evidently used as emblematic of the GREAT ONES which that proud and vain man wickedly pretended to. The entire prophecy is a bitter and most cutting satirical reproof for his false assumption. It is probable he used the figure of the cherubim as the insignia of himself in state matters.

Digitized by Google

THE RESURRECTION GLORIES OF THE REDEEMER;

OR,

THE SACRED EVENTS OF THE FORTY DAYS AFTER THE RESURRECTION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Morning, December 1st, 1867.

BEING THE TWELFTH OF A SERIES OF DISCOURSES ON THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST ON THIS EARTH.

"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."—Acts i. 3.

The Resurrection Glories of Christ were reserved exclusively for his church. They were of a character too sacred for the common gaze of men in general, and, therefore, they were concealed from the men of the world, but most graciously revealed to his disciples. Though there were no earthly witnesses to the Lord's resurrection, yet he has given many infallible proofs that he himself is the indubitable witness of the truth, that he rose again according to the Scriptures; and the text we have read expresses most emphatically that he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The fact is also to be marked of the total absence of any record that in no instance did our Lord reveal himself to any person, Jew or Gentile, who was an unbeliever, or who did not follow him as a disciple. With the men of this world he never more conversed. He was seen no more of men, as men of the world. This fact, I say, is too significant to be overlooked. It is one that must never be forgotten by those who are his spiritual disciples, or by those who deem themselves his followers.

Digitized by Google

Our object is to take up the various events in the history of the forty days after the resurrection, showing, by the light of inspired truth, that he who had the mercy to lay down his life had power to take it again; and that the body in which he was seen during those forty days was the veritable body in which he was known when in the public exercises of his ministry amongst men generally. This point is in keeping with my other discourses on the Life and Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. The doctrine of his real humanity is not, I think, sufficiently entered into by many believers, and hence there is often a lamentable deficiency in the character of their faith. Our remarks are not intended to meet the objections of speculative theorists; our object is *to feed* the Church of God whilst dwelling upon the recital of those events which marked the concluding part of the Redeemer's earthly history; this we will endeavour to do in as regular and orderly manner as the different records of the inspired narrators will enable us to do. May the Lord be pleased to give us his help and blessing while meditating upon so sacred a theme.

Those who examine the record of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and reflect upon its importance as a part of the history of the divine word made flesh, will be prepared to understand how God's name was infinitely glorified by the death of his own beloved Son. There is this peculiarity in the Resurrection of the Redeemer, that it is, perhaps, more than any other event in his history, bound up with the hopes of his disciples, and with the character of his church. The Bible, for instance, would be admitted by many who would be unwilling to receive the faith of Christians generally. The Crucifixion leaves no room for doubt upon historical grounds. But the Resurrection is a fact of another class; it is an alleged preternatural occurrence, upon the truth of which the character of the apostles is staked, and upon which, as a foundation, the Church of God stands. The Christian's faith cannot be separated from the truth of Christ having risen again. It is either a cardinal fact or else the grossest imposture ever palmed upon man's credulity.

We may also observe that we are not surprised at the apostle Paul putting the question before Agrippa, as he did: Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? The doctrine of the resurrection was the promise of God to the patriarchs of

Digitized by Google

Israel, whose twelve tribes were distinguished as serving God day and night. The promise was of the life that now is and of that which is to come; so that the distinguishing principle that exists between those who serve God and those who serve him not, is the belief of the resurrection of the body. In the old dispensation it was grounded on the promise of God. In the new dispensation it is grounded on the fact THE LORD HAS RISEN. This was the basis of what the apostles preached. Paul, in numerous instances, speaks of the resurrection of Christ. Peter speaks of believers being begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead as the blessed result which they now possess. For, as Paul truly argues: "If Christ is not raised, we are yet in our sins; our faith is vain, preachers are false witnesses, and, if in this life we only have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable;" for by it we cut off ourselves from the enjoyment of this present life, and deceive ourselves as to the future. But those who have faith, true-saving faith, the faith of God's elect, believe most cordially the doctrine of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, him whom Joseph and Nicodemus laid in the new tomb hewn in the rock; believers feel they have a joyful hope, a lively hope of eternal salvation, because it is secured by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; they feel that the resurrection is a cardinal truth, it guarantees to them their own resurrection, and is a pledge of their own future victory over death and corruption.

And we may say, too, not of our own resurrection only, but even of what lies beyond. Die we must. Jesus died; he rose, so must we. Bear in mind the great principle of the resurrection—the corn of wheat, when laid in the earth, dies, but it yields a future crop. The remembrance of our risen Lord will always press upon us the thought that the nature of his resurrection body must involve something, at any rate, remotely analogous to the nature of the future bodies of his glorified saints. Our hope, therefore, is a glorious hope; Christ formed in our hearts the hope of glory. Where he is we expect to be. He has said, and we believe it, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, ye may be also." Well, therefore, might Peter say, "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now

Digitized by Google

ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

I have made these remarks on the resurrection of our Lord in the hope that they may tend to cheer our hearts and animate us to take a deeper interest in the subject now to come under our consideration.

The *first* event to be noticed is the record of Mark, xvi. 9: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils."* She was the last at the cross, but first at the tomb. The scene of the meeting was near the sepulchre; it was early, the sun had not risen far above the horizon; the guards had left, and were on their way to make a report to the chief priests of what had been done, what they had seen, and the terror that even under pain of death induced them to leave their posts. The angels now sat in the empty tomb, but Jesus was in the locality. The early dawn, the misty atmosphere, and the full-heaving hearts and pre-occupied thoughts of the women intent on embalming the dead body of their precious Lord, would very naturally preclude any expectation of seeing him alive. Yet unexpectedly Mary did see a person, who courteously addressed her, and inquired the cause of her weeping and whom she was seeking. She, supposing him to be the gardener, and also that his thoughts were as much occupied about her Lord as her own, said, without using any antecedent, "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him." Then Jesus, again speaking, but in a tone of voice well known to her, said, "Mary." Instantly she recognised his person, and answered, "Rabboni, my great Master," and would have embraced his feet; but that the present moment might be improved to the advantage of others rather than the indulgence of her own personal feelings of surprise, joy, and affection, she was not then permitted. Jesus said, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John xx. 15-17.)†

* Dr. Kitto ("Daily Readings," Vol. VII.), states that the interview with Mary Magdalene was *after* that with the two Marys. If Dr. K. is right, then Mark is wrong; but what saith the Scripture? "When Jesus was risen he appeared *first* to Mary Magdalene."

† See the author's sermon on this text where the different points here referred to are taken up and handled at large. "The Truth as it is in Jesus," (No. 8).

Digitized by Google

To Mary Magdalene, therefore, Jesus *first* appeared after his resurrection. He had seen her weeping, and had heard the cause thereof, for the angels asked her why she wept, and she had said it was because they had taken away her Lord, and that she knew not where they had laid him. Then Jesus spoke, asking her why she wept, and what she is looking for. In those questions doubtless she saw but the kindness of an apparent stranger, and therefore would not so soon recognise her Lord, but when spoken to by name we see, as we well know by our own experience, how recognition is assisted.

We have not time to enter into the great doctrine of the divine relationship that exists between the Church of God and with Christ and the Father as couched in the first revelation of resurrection truth to Mary. "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." The mystical union between Christ and his church is a wonderful theme; it surpasses the wondrous intelligence of angels; it is one of the wonders of redeeming love which eternity itself will fail to unfold. To Mary Magdalene was the high honour accorded of seeing first her Redeemer, and to hear him speak of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Not only so, but to have the great and glorious doctrine of divine and eternal union applied to her own soul by the loving Saviour himself.

But to proceed. By the record (Matt. xxviii. 9) it would appear that the next appearance of Jesus was to the women who came with Mary Magdalene, Mary the wife of Cleophas, the mother of James and Joses, and also Salome and Joanna (Mark xvi. 1, and Luke xxiv. 10), as they were on their way running to tell his disciples what they had seen and what the angels had said to them.* Jesus met them and greeted them, saying, "All hail." He then permitted them to salute his feet, and received their worship. Women were the first persons after his

* Mary Magdalene, I think, must have tarried behind, which would account for the interview being *prior* to that with the other women returning from the sepulchre. We may also reasonably suppose that Mary Magdalene was an unmarried person and had no tie to require her elsewhere, and she would feel no desire to leave the spot where she had witnessed the scene of her Lord's burial; but the other women, being married and having naturally more of the social element, they hasted to bring the disciples word. Cleophas received, no doubt, the news from his wife.

Digitized by Google

resurrection permitted and honoured to worship Him whose name is above every name. We cannot in this place trace out and put in one connected historical statement all the circumstances attending and following the resurrection as related in the gospels; indeed, it would be a difficult task without being tedious to persons who are neither critics nor sceptics, and therefore we purposely omit the interview with the angels in the sepulchre, and the incident of the two disciples, Peter and John, going there; but we cannot but notice the busy affectionate regard which the Galilean women exhibited in preparing and carrying the spices for embalming the sacred body of their Lord. As soon as the Sabbath was ended they commenced their labour of love, and set off to the spot while it was yet dark. As they drew near to the sepulchre it occurred to them they were but weak in themselves and without the appliances which men usually employ, saying, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? and when they looked they saw that the stone was rolled away, for it was very great." How often it is that when we contemplate apparent difficulties in the way of providence and duty, as we approach them we find they have been removed, or at least have no existence as we supposed. These good women, however, from finding the sepulchre open, concluded at first that the Lord's body had been stolen away; such, at least, evidently was Mary Magdelene's impression, nor did what was said by the angel remove it. So true it is that if the love of Christ has once had its place in our hearts, neither angels nor men can ever supply its absence and remove false fears; only the person of Christ himself can assure the heart and set it at rest.

But how much these gracious women must have been soothed and cheered when Jesus met them, and when he said, in a joyous tone, "All hail," wishing them all health and prosperity, as the words mean. Words of kindness, oh how cheering, when the heart is filled with woe. In the midst of their grief and excitement, hasting with all speed to communicate the surprising intelligence which, perhaps, they could scarcely credit, they are intercepted by the loving Saviour himself. Then they were assured beyond a doubt it was their veritable friend, the risen Jesus. Their first act was to adore him as their God and Saviour, and he graciously received their worship; he silenced their fears, and gave them a message to carry to

Digitized by Google

his brethren, the disciples. He spake of them there as his brethren, though none, excepting John, had behaved like brethren, for they had all forsaken him and fled on the dark and doleful night of his betrayal. But the loving Lord harbours no resentment; he knew the flesh was weak. It was from no want of love, but they felt their weakness, and were filled with fear. The message was taken, though it was not credited at the time; the news seemed too good to be true.

We must bear in mind that Peter and John, on hearing of the empty tomb, went immediately to the sepulchre. The incident that is related shows how full the minds of these two disciples were of everything that related to the death of their Lord and Master. We must also bear in mind that to Peter expressly was there a message sent that the Lord had risen, and that the disciples were to expect to see him in Galilee. We are also to bear in mind that in the evening the eleven disciples in their meeting, on receiving the other two disciples from their journey to Emmaus, were eager in relating the appearance of Jesus to *Peter* in particular, and that it is also stated by itself in the account given by the apostle Paul. This would make it a notable fact; the more so, because no evangelist has recorded it. Why so? Because the interview was strictly private and too sacred in its character to be seen by other eyes, and to be recorded in words common to all readers. Peter himself makes no allusion to it. No; there are certain events, incidents, and circumstances which happen in the course of a believer's experience which no human eye must see or human ear hear. The transaction is alone with God and the soul. The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joys. Peter had sinned deeply, had wept bitterly; his grief and his anguish was commensurate with the love of his heart. What passed in that sacred interview no third person can relate, but it did take place. None but a broken-hearted Jesus knows what a broken-hearted backslider feels. Peter was not only restored to society, but also restored to his Lord. If the Lord had not restored him he would have been lost to society, but Jesus sought him out, comforted his heart, assured him of his forgiving love, and healed the wounds that sin had made. He who knew all things knew that Peter loved him sincerely, but no mortal on earth will ever know what

Digitized by Google

then took place, nor need we inquire; we have no vain curiosity. But this we would impress upon all who deeply feel the wound they have caused by forsaking the way of truth and righteousness: The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways. Sin is its own punishment. Sin stings the sinner with bitter remorse, compunction, and sorrow; but remorse and grief do but keep open the wounds; they never heal; and until the Lord of life and love shall come with his healing balm there can be neither comfort nor hope. Few and rare are the sympathies of Christian brethren in such cases. It is partly from pride, ignorance, and mortification that erring brethren are left unattended to. We say nothing against their being excluded from nominal membership—propriety and the word of God may demand that; but too often they are cast out like a broken vessel, and no attempts are made to restoration. But it is our mercy to know it is not so with our loving Lord; he looks after his wanderers. It was one of his first concerns after his resurrection to look for Peter. He knew where to find him; and when they met it was a sacred meeting indeed—one weeping for grief, the other, it may be, weeping for very love. Love makes a lover weep, as well as grief. We have known well what it is to feel love and grief the heart dividing in one's own soul. Those sacred emotions are known only to such who have felt and realised deeply the love of Jesus. A bursting heart can only be healed by the Lord himself, and this he always does in secret. These meetings with God and the soul are sacred even to God himself. He has never revealed to any of his servants the secret griefs and comforts that have passed between the penitent returning backslider and the compassionate heart of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pass on. By the middle of the day, the chief priests, the Sanhedrim, had received the report of the soldiers, the Romans testified the fact, the Jewish leaders accepted it and shuffled it into silence; but the friends of Jesus required fuller confirmation—some doubted. Even the two disciples going to Emmaus were of that number. It was the middle of the day, most probably after the interview with Peter, that Jesus stepped up to these men as they were thoughtfully walking; one of whom was Cleophas, not Cephas, nor yet of the eleven. He had heard what his wife had related, but seems not to have attached much weight to it. They were still filled with sadness; it

Digitized by Google

was seen in their countenance; it was heard in their mournful voice, and, doubtless, many a deep, heavy sigh and groan escaped them as they passed along. Jesus knew their thoughts, he knew how sad they were, he knew the occasion of their grief; but he, as the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, was touched with their sorrows and their grief. The Spirit of the Lord God was upon him, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. He spake unto them of the things pertaining to God, he chided them for their slowness of apprehension, but he opened their understandings, and they understood the Scriptures. Their hearts burned within them while he talked with them by the way, as he opened up to them the Scriptures. O what a resurrection glory was this! The heart made to glow with love to him that died; such love as they never had felt before, such views of truth as they had never seen before; and all this mingled with such social freedom of friendliness that emanated from union of heart in the things of God. O how delightful this union of soul! None but believers in Christ know what it is, this knitting together in love of souls of a kindred spirit in the things of God—Christian experience and providential dispensations. These disciples, how marvellously they discovered their divine Lord, in the simple act of blessing the evening meal.

Yet there is nothing particularly surprising in the fact that the two disciples failed to recognise the Lord, though their hearts burned while the Scriptures were opened up to them by this remarkable stranger. We are told, "their eyes were holden, that they should not know him," so that, by a divine interposition, they were prevented from recognising the Lord till he was pleased to reveal himself. Mark even says that he appeared "in a different form" to two of them. What Mark expresses in one form of words, Luke expresses in another; both, however, asserting the same simple truth that the Lord exercised a power, whether belonging to him in respect of his divine nature, or of his most sinless, pure, and now glorified humanity, by which, whensoever it seemed good to him, his holy body suddenly ceased to be seen, or appeared without those lineaments that were necessary for recognition. His voice, style of speech, countenance, all unrecognisable. Our own experience is, and that of all

Digitized by Google

believers, that the presence of our Lord to our hearts is sovereignly mysterious, spiritual, evanescent as to duration, yet heart-warming, as near like this visit at Emmaus as like is like.

We may, therefore, take great consolation from the fact that the social and spiritual manifestation of Jesus to these two disciples is that which is graciously continued still to every member of his living family.

But now let us return to the narrative. These travellers return from Emmaus, and know where to find the eleven gathered together, by appointment, no doubt. The new comers are greeted with the joyful tidings, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." And they, too, in their turn, have a testimony to give to their friends, more full and explicit than any that had yet been delivered of that eventful day. Mary Magdalene, the other two Marys, Joanna, Salome, Peter, these had seen the Lord. It was really a fact; he had risen indeed; it could not be doubted. But the visitors had not only seen the Lord; he had walked with them, he had communed with them. They were instructed by him, sat with him at mealtime, received bread from his hands, and heard him bless the food; the peculiar manner of which and the unveiling of himself at the same moment discovered the great truth of which they were before unconscious, except that their hearts burned with love to him while he opened to them the Scriptures. But, lo! a fuller testimony was yet to be given. Even while the eleven are examining the two witnesses, and searching every particle of their testimony, Jesus himself appeared amongst them, and, with words of peaceful greeting, showed unto them both his pierced hands and wounded side. They were at first terrified, for the doors were closed; and yet they saw their Lord standing before them. Yes, in that very body which was nailed to the cross and which the soldiers pierced. It was not a bodiless spirit, for there was his flesh and his bones, which no disembodied spirit possesses. But if seeing is believing, handling is more assuring. So the half faithless and excited disciples are desired to handle him and to feel him; and not only so, a special sign of human nature was used to bring final conviction. He asked for something to eat; they gave him fish and honeycomb. It was taken by him, to show that he had the power of eating it, though not the need of it. His body was truly human, as much

Digitized by Google

so as theirs, though his was sinless and uncorrupted by death. The Lord was pleased to eat, in the presence of them all, and then they believed with all the fulness of a fervent, lasting, and enduring faith.

There was, however, at this meeting, one absentee, Thomas, and for all the overwhelming testimony of the assembled believers, yet he would not believe. He himself must have ocular demonstration; he, too, must have a personal manifestation. So the unconvinced Thomas seeks for outward and material evidences, and for seven days he was left unsatisfied and unblessed. His wilful unbelief was the great barrier of his joy and peace. I suspect pride was at the bottom of it all. One and another had seen the Lord, Mary Magdalene, Peter, James, and the two visitors to Emmaus; they had had special interviews, but he had not; therefore, unless he could positively prove to his senses the actual wounds of the Lord's body, he would not believe. So he could have no fellowship with the other disciples in the comfort arising from the fact that the Lord had risen, and therefore was left isolated in darkness and unbelief. We cannot but see, however, how sovereignly the Lord manifested himself to some and not to others. In Mary Magdalene's case one could almost divine the reason why she should be so favoured as to be blessed with the first sight of him to whom her love and gratitude was a constant burning flame, the sense of which she had never lost. Some reason, doubtless, existed in the mind of the Saviour, why she, who was the last at his burial, and the first to be at the grave with the preparations for embalming him, should have the comfort and joy of seeing her risen Saviour first. In his lifetime, she spared no expense to testify her love to him who had done so much for her, and now all her sorrow is turned into joy; for at the earliest possible moment of time, the Lord visits her, and pours heavenly consolation into her wounded heart. Peter was likewise favoured; but we will not further intrude into the particulars of that sacred interview. The apostle James had also an interview before the rest of the apostles, but of what nature, when, or where, it is not recorded. The apostle Paul merely states the fact. (1 Cor. xv. 7.) Unless it was James who was with Cleophas, which is not unlikely, as he was his son, and they probably went together to see a friend, and to spend the night at Emmaus, but on the unexpected discovery of

Digitized by Google

the risen Saviour, could no longer remain, but hastened back to Jerusalem, to communicate the surprising tidings of what they had seen and heard.

We read in John's record how, on the day when the Lord renewed his appearance to his assembled disciples, he appeared in the same supernatural way; and we mark with adoring wonder how the personal test which the doubting apostle had required, was offered to him; and it is with thankful joy that we hear that outburst of inspired conviction that now recognised the risen Jesus; not so much the humanity as the divinity—"My Lord and my God" is now the assuring exclamation, a divine assurance from a personal manifestation. Such an assurance many thousands of believers have since needed, and, in a spiritual sense, no other is of lasting service to the Lord's doubting ones. We see in this instance, too, the sovereignty of our Lord. He withheld from Thomas, for a whole week, the manifestation of himself in a private or personal intercourse. Had Thomas been with the disciples at the first, doubtless he would have been spared the loss and pain which his absence entailed upon him.

Thus far the second general appearance of our Lord to his disciples. It is idle and vain to raise questions as to the intervening time in which he was unseen, and which is not recorded. It is our wisdom to be silent, and to suppress foolish curiosity. One thing is probable: the fact of these two meetings with the disciples fixed the first day of the week to be observed as the Christian Sabbath for divine worship.

We come now to "the *third* time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead, and on this wise showed he himself." It would appear that the disciples had gone into Galilee, as they had been instructed, that some time had elapsed, and the disciples were disbanded, and some had arranged to return to their former occupations. Peter proposed to six of the brethren to hire a boat, and recommence fishing. They consented, and went at once to business. They chose a favourable time for their work, but there was no success; all night they toiled, but caught no fish. In the morning, a stranger appears on the beach, and he inquires, if they have any meat; it is generally supposed, fish to sell, so-called meat; but I am inclined to think the question was meant as to their personal want of food to eat, as well as of fish for trading. The stranger directs

Digitized by Google

them to cast the net on the other side of the ship, which they did, all which shows the homely, simple way of life of those times. The suggestion was easy to adopt. They had nothing to lose by following the advice of a stranger, and who might possibly be a buyer. The wonderful and miraculous draught, however, at once arouses their attention. Such a sudden contrast. They look again at the stranger with wonder and amazement at their unexpected success. John sees the divinity, as well as the humanity, of his Lord. The Lord is known by the operation of his hands. John immediately communicates with Peter, saying, "It is the Lord." At once Peter rushes impetuously to meet his Lord. He cannot wait another moment. Boat, fish, companions, water, everything is left, so that the shore shall be reached, and he pay his adoring acknowledgments to his beloved Lord.

The other points to be noticed at this time of Jesus showing himself are his instructions for bringing the fish to land, in which Peter assisted, the circumstances of the morning meal, and the subsequent conversion. However strange and perplexing, the fire of coals, fish laid thereon, and bread, it shows the kindness of the human heart of Jesus to provide for the bodily wants of his wearied disciples in their first toil for their daily bread. No doubt the fire and food were miraculous. He tells them to come and dine. They make no question as to his personality, "knowing that it was the Lord;" they as well knew his human form and his divine acts as ever they did, and they were not wanting in interest of anything that he did or said; indeed, I doubt not but that every movement was closely observed, and that they listened with absorbed attention to every word he uttered. They had not forgotten the message which Mary Magdalene had delivered: he was to ascend to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God. He had before given intimations of this on the night of the institution of the supper—he had told them the purpose for which he was going, it was to prepare a place for them, that where he was they were to be also; so that they were in expectation of his departure, and probably, there might come over them some feeling of mysterious dread and trembling, apprehensive that, perhaps, this might be the time. It is at this meeting that John and Peter are seen again in their wonted relations of warmest and clinging love to their Lord and Master. We see him gradually and mysteriously withdrawing; we see

Digitized by Google

the elder apostle following the command of his Lord; what heart-searching questions, put to Peter personally, "Simon, lovest thou me?" Three times he had denied the Lord, and thrice was the question put. Poor Peter's heart is ready to burst with grief—what a momentous crisis in a believer's experience; the touchstone of a sincere believer, "Lovest thou me?" O for grace, as Peter had, to appeal to the Lord as the heart-searching and the rein-trying God, the omniscient God. "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Believer in the Lord Jesus, we don't ask you how much you know, or what others think of you; but what does the Lord know of you; it is a matter between God and your conscience as to whether you can appeal to your Saviour God that he knows that you do love him in sincerity and truth.

To return. This interview with the seven disciples was not the last. The Lord had promised to meet them in the place where they had now met. And here, no doubt, all had assembled, hourly expecting the complete fulfilment of a promise of a further revelation. Probably on a mountain which the Lord had appointed, perhaps Tabor; he manifested himself not only to the eleven disciples, the women that usually followed him, but also to the five hundred *brethren* spoken of by Paul. This interview must have been of the deepest solemnity and sacred interest, and tends to set forth the majesty of the risen Lord in a manner far more distinct than had ever yet been witnessed; some, it appears, doubted: even the evidence of their own senses was insufficient. It was here, on the mountain in Galilee, to the congregation of five hundred, that Jesus declared the unlimited power he possessed in heaven and on earth; it was here he commissioned his apostles to disciple, and to baptise his followers in the name of the Three-One God, assuring them of his continual presence: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;" as much as to say, his local and bodily presence was not to be looked for: this is what I believe is meant, though I know thousands of good men think differently. Be this as it may, we are all confident of this one thing, that Jesus spiritually is with his people alway, even to the end of the world, that period when the last ransomed sinner shall have been gathered to the fold of Jesus, even to the hour when his mediatorial kingdom shall be merged in the eternity of his everlasting reign of God being all in all.

Digitized by Google

One farther and last interview is yet to be vouchsafed, and that of a higher and of a holier character than has yet been witnessed. Pentecost was drawing nigh, Jesus and his disciples return to Jerusalem, no doubt, by his command; and probably, in the well-known "Upper Room," where they had assembled six weeks before; there he appeared to them for the last time; in what mysterious manner we know not; but being in the midst, he reminded them of his former prophecies, and that all things must be fulfilled in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning him; then it was that he opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures; he then gave them a charge as to the great doctrines of salvation to be preached in his name; they were to abide in Jerusalem, until they were endowed with power from on high. How full must have been their hearts of mighty presentiments and exalted hopes. Again they asked the strange question as to his restoring the kingdom of Israel. Was this to be the much expected time? What carnal conceptions they had of spiritual truths; even then their minds were upon things temporal, instead of that which is eternal. Such enquiries were solemnly silenced; it was not for them to know the times and seasons which the Father had reserved in his own power; they are to be the Lord's witnesses; they are not to expect an earthly kingdom, but to prepare others for a heavenly kingdom. Jesus, having now given them his farewell instructions, as the messengers of his gospel, he led them out, from this upper room, as far as to Bethany; no doubt they followed in mysterious and solemn silence through the streets of the city, until they had passed over the brook, and reached Bethany, the locality of his much-loved friends, Martha and her sister Mary and Lazarus; once more he seemed to desire a visit to this dear family, and to give them his parting blessing, as their ever faithful friend. Pardon my imagination, but I cannot think he chose Bethany for the sake of its rising ground or its green grass; the Bethany family was most dear to him; their house had been the scene of his friendship, and where he had often enjoyed a quiet retreat after the fatigues of preaching and journeys, and now he leaves the place embalmed with the sacred recollection that from there he ascended unto his Father, and their Father, to his God and their God. His disciples were now enriched with heavenly promises and benedictions, and while he

Digitized by Google

was blessing them with uplifted hands, he was parted from them; they beheld him still rising and blessing them, until a cloud received him from their sight, and angelic voices addressed to them those words of mingled warning, consolation, and prophecy: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven." Thus the Lord of glory closed the period of his bodily presence on earth. It was a dignity suitable to the occasion, that angels should be present when the Lord of angels ascended to the throne of his Father. They attended him at his birth in Bethlehem; they ministered to him when in the wilderness, after the temptation, by them he was helped in Gethsemane; and at his sepulchre, they had the charge over his body; and now having ushered the King of Glory into the portals of heaven, they return as the heralds of peace and consolation to the bereaved disciples, who immediately, and for the first time, worshipped him in a spiritual and believing manner, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.

Thus, dear friends, I have endeavoured to set forth, something of the resurrection glories of the Redeemer, by contemplating the various events of the forty days in the life of our Lord on earth, after his resurrection. What a halo of glory surrounds his first appearance to Mary Magdalene. The whole scene was one of surpassing interest, beyond the power of words to describe, or the art of the painter to depict; she had beheld the angels, they had spoken to her and she had told them her grief. Jesus presented himself at that moment, she saw him standing, the question is repeated, and the same reply, with a declaration that strikes our admiration, and that one thrilling word as *he* spake it "Mary," how it surprised her into instant conviction, and he stands revealed before her in his resurrection glory; he had left his weakness on the cross, and had now risen triumphant over death, hell, and the grave; Mary is no longer to regard him as the object of her love on earth, but the object of her worship in heaven, whither he is about to ascend: a moment before she believed not the truth of his resurrection, though asserted by angels; now her faith must be raised to the mystery of his ascension to the right hand of God in heaven.

Digitized by Google

Our Lord's second appearance was to the two Marys, Salome, and Joanna. This was another resurrection glory; they were permitted to hold him by the feet, and they worshipped him as their divine Lord. His pierced feet gave ample evidence that it was the same body of him who was crucified, and to whose personal wants they were accustomed to minister; here we see his unabated love and friendship, his love is still the same; the services of affection which these women had rendered are rewarded by an interview of character which has a glory entailed upon it as long as the world shall stand, and memory holds its seat, for this little company of godly women had the first honour of joining together in the worship of the risen Saviour.

What a heavenly glory surrounds the personal interview with Peter. Peter had been faithless, Jesus had turned and looked upon him; that one look broke his heart; now that the Lord is risen, he hastens to the place where Peter is to be found, it is to soothe, not to reproach; to comfort, not to condemn; this is a resurrection glory which to the present hour is a source of consolation to every sincere returning penitent who may have in words, or in actions, denied their Lord and Master.

The two brethren who journeyed to Emmaus, and the account they give of the Lord explaining the scriptures, and manifesting himself, reveals a glory the like of which had not been known before; in a spiritual manner these visits have been repeated many times since to believers, and it is one of those resurrection glories which many have often desired to experience again and again.

Those two manifestations which the Lord vouchsafed to the disciples generally, show us how it is that he appears amongst us still; not bodily, it is true, but his spiritual presence is confirming, comforting, and strengthening. How condescending, compassionate, and assuring are all his words; mysteriously and sovereignly he comes with peace, removes our doubts, and sets our aching hearts at rest.

The third time when he showed himself has a peculiar glory about it; there is more in it than human tongue can utter. We cannot but observe the altered bearing of the risen Lord, so different from that when, before death, he joined in the social circle with all the familiarity of a friend, he wept with those who wept, and submitted himself to the scorn, reproach, and persecution of those who hated him.

Digitized by Google

Now, there is a marked reserve in all his intercourse with his disciples; there is a mysterious obscurity and a dignified abruptness in his movements; there is a depth and an authority in his discourses, brief as they all are, which give to his carriage and conduct a degree of majesty which they had not felt or seen before. Hence we see no more the unreserved familiarities which human friendships allow. No longer to be viewed as the Son of Man, by men, but by the church as the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

"At one time he says, 'Touch me not;' at another, 'Handle me and see.' When it so pleased him, he was visible, yet not recognised; or invisible, and 'vanished out of sight:' or, if as incorporeal, when 'the doors were shut he stood in the midst.' He was no longer subject to infirmities, want, or suffering. We shall behold him during the forty days which he remained on earth, going in and out as a spirit might do; yet his open wounds are palpable to sight and to touch; his flesh and bones are not those of a spirit. Now he permits his person or his voice to be known; then again the disciples believe them to be another's, according to his own desire and absolute will. He breathes the Holy Ghost upon them with an authority mysterious and solemn beyond his wont; yet he eats in their presence, to show clearly that his risen body is not a phantom. He is no longer their companion on journeys, or their teacher by parables and familiar discourses. He exists apart—they know not where; meets them suddenly by the way, or in Jerusalem, or Galilee, and as suddenly withdraws himself. He appears already on the move within his higher kingdom. The brows which were so lately crowned with thorns will soon wear the heavenly diadem. 'There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.' They seemed to be united unspeakably in the person of the risen Saviour."*

But time rolls on; it warns me that I must not linger upon these precious facts, for other duties require us else-

* This masterly description is extracted from pp. 766-7 of an invaluable work, "The Messiah," published by Murray. The author of it kindly presented me with a copy at the time I was preparing my twelve Lectures on the Life and Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.—C.G.

Digitized by Google

where. But before we quite dismiss the subject, let us ask what are the *Lessons* which we may learn from the several facts thus put before us? The first is—

That as Jesus, when he rose and left the dead, completely separated himself from the world, so must all who are buried with him by baptism, rise with him into newness of life, and separate themselves from the spirit of this world. This is the main point of the Christian life; separation, complete separation from the world, and living unto God. This is the power of Christ's resurrection, and which the Apostle Paul so ardently longed to know, "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." What is this, then, but for the believer to become as dead to the world in spirit, as Jesus was in body to the men of the world then living, they were dead to him as he was dead to them; he was never more seen by them; he never more spoke to them; he was forgotten by them, esteemed as a dead man out of mind; if he bodily passed through the streets, he was unrecognised by the men of the world, they knew him no more; he was in the world, yet the world knew him not. So should it be with his disciples. We are not of the world, though necessarily in it; our occupations in life bring us into the business of life, and it is the order of God's providence; yet we are commanded to come out from among them, to be separate and touch not the unclean thing; and wherefore? Because we are henceforth to live unto God; we are not to partake of their spirit; we are not to enter into their pursuits, nor their pleasures, nor are we to follow their maxims; we have professedly left the spirit of the world; it is no longer our master. The believer in Christ lives in another atmosphere; he lives on other food, he lives by faith upon the Son of God, he has fellowship with him in his sufferings; the world hates him and treats him with scorn, looks upon him as a dead man, as one having no part in the things of this life, takes no interest in him, and passes him by as one soon to be buried in oblivion; with him they can have no fellowship of soul, nor he with them. Now, dear friends, do you know what this deadness to the world is? Is the world thus dead to you, and are you thus dead to the world? This is a most searching question. Are you entangled with the world, or are you completely separated from it?

Digitized by Google

That is, in its spirit, pursuits, pleasures, and privileges; or, at least, are you desiring so to be? Unless such is the case, you know nothing of the power of Christ's resurrection, nor have you fellowship with his sufferings, nor are you made conformable to his death; you are living in the flesh and cannot please God; for they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in these things.

2. *That as Jesus, after his resurrection, spoke only of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, so must his disciples order their conversation one with another in this world.* They who live in the Spirit must also walk in the Spirit. To have our conversation in heaven is to speak only of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. This is what the fellowship of the saints should be. The risen Saviour is an example for all his followers. The things pertaining to the kingdom of God—what are they? Certainly they are not the externals of religion, nor yet the circumstances of God's house; too often, alas! these matters, and sometimes other things even not so good as these, form the topics of conversation among the professing people of God. O what barrenness of soul is evinced where the things pertaining to God are not spoken of! "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard." To speak of the things pertaining to God is to speak of the things that accompany salvation, so far as we may know them by our own experience and the teachings of God's spirit; Christ and his salvation, the glory of his person, his work, offices, and the adorable characters he sustains, are things that pertain to the kingdom of God; the kingdom of God is within, and consists in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. All this has to do with what is called the work of grace in the soul; things known and felt in the heart; what God *is* to us, and what God is *doing* for us. What interminable topics of conversation for believers who are living in accordance with their privileges and hopes. Blessed fellowship! We talk of the communion of saints, but where are the saints who have this communion? Brethren! "what manner of communications are these that ye have one with another?" Will it bear inquiring into, and comparing with that of the two disciples as they were walking to Emmaus? They talked together of all these things

Digitized by Google

which had happened. What things? Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, his death and resurrection, and the interest and hopes they had in him. Dear friends, when you get together, talk about these things; you will attract the presence of Jesus, he will join your company, and cause your hearts to burn with love. But lastly—

3. *That as Jesus, after he had risen, gave many infallible proofs that he was alive, so ought all his followers to give ample and unmistakeable testimony that they are living unto God.* When Jesus died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth—he liveth unto God. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God. We are henceforth not to live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." We must give proof that we are living unto God by our walk and conversation amongst one another, we are to love as brethren; we are to walk in wisdom towards them that are without. As strangers and pilgrims we are to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, having our conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against us as evil doers, we may, by our well doing, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. No man can live unto God by his own power. To know the power of Christ's resurrection is to have an experience of divine power wrought in the soul by Christ himself. The inner life of the believer is that which he derives by the faith of the Son of God; he looks to him daily for the support and maintenance of every grace; and when there is the true life of God in the soul, there will be infallible proofs manifested in the outward life. Life in Christ is Christ in the Life. The fruits of the Spirit are seen in those who walk in the Spirit. Dying to self and living to God is the life, walk, and triumph of faith. We are to live above ourselves, and above the world; this is the infallible testimony, both before the world and before God, that we are living unto him; much of it, indeed, is a hidden life, but its proof is infallible. God seals the testimony by his Spirit, dwells in the heart by faith, and thus the believer is enabled to glorify God in his daily calling and conscience, without partaking of the spirit of the world; he is dead to it, but alive unto God.

Christian professor, have you any of these infallible

Digitized by Google

proofs that your religion is a living one? To have a "name that thou livest and art dead" is an awful and a dangerous delusion. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked."

NOTE.

Our text speaks of *many* infallible proofs which our Lord gave of his being alive after he had risen. We do not, however, find more than *ten* instances, at the most, distinctly recorded. The order may be thus stated:—*Five times on the day of the resurrection*—viz., first to Mary Magdalene; then again to Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joses (besides Joanna and Salome, who were in all probability with them); to Simon Peter alone; to the two disciples at Emmaus; to the assembled disciples (Thomas excepted) in Jerusalem. *Five times afterwards*—viz., to the assembled disciples in Jerusalem, Thomas being present; to the assembled disciples at the sea of Tiberius; on the mountain in Galilee to the eleven, and the five hundred spoken of by the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 6; to James, mentioned in the same account, verse 6; and to the Apostles on the day of Ascension, Luke xxiv. 50, 51; Acts i. 4-12.

We are not to understand from this statement that these were the only instances of the Lord's appearances to his disciples, for in John's Gospel xxi. 25, we read: "And there are also *many* other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written." This, I think, is to be understood of the things which Jesus did after his resurrection, as appears from the latter part of the verse, which would then agree with our text, Jesus did many more things besides what is written. The phrase "the world itself could not contain," is to be understood of the opposers and unbelievers in the person of Christ the Messiah, and of his resurrection, who would not *receive* the testimony that should be written; and nothing would be more natural and obvious to suppose, for the evidences, or proofs, were of a character which they could have no means of judging; except upon the *ex parte* statement of the disciples themselves, for they only had seen the risen Jesus. With true believers it is otherwise; the evidences, as recorded, are quite sufficient for them to receive.

Digitized by Google

THE

ETERNAL MANHOOD OF JESUS IN HEAVEN*

IN RESPECT OF HIS PRIESTHOOD, AND BEING THE FORERUNNNER OF HIS PEOPLE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, December 1st, 1867.

"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—HEB. VII. 24, 25.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—HEB. VI. 19, 20.

SOME of my hearers are, no doubt, aware that I have at different times preached a series of discourses on the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth. Through the whole of that series I have pursued but one line of thought, keeping in view my one design—namely, to exhibit the indications of the genuineness and real human nature which the history of our Lord affords. In carrying out this design I have felt it necessary to lay as much stress upon his true humanity as, upon other occasions, his true divinity. Now, in order to complete my design, I feel it needful to go beyond the limit of an ordinary biography, the limit of death and the grave; and having considered the forty days of the Redeemer's resurrection glories, we would now contemplate his eternal manhood—that is, his abiding even in heaven in his human nature. Of course our contemplations place us

* The term, *eternal manhood*, as I use it, is not to be understood in relation to the pre-existence of Christ's human soul whatever; nor yet in respect of his appearance in human form before his incarnation, but only as to *the perpetuity* of that identical body in which he was born of the Virgin, and, as this perpetuity is to be viewed in relation to the present needs and future happiness of the church of God. I make this explanation here in order to prevent misapprehension on first reading the title of this discourse. Most of my readers are, no doubt, aware that I am an avowed antagonist to, what I consider, those absurd myths which some men, who are wise above what is written, affect to believe and teach.

Digitized by Google

in a region beyond and distinct from the narratives which the historical gospels contain; we are at once taken into the region of faith. The truths themselves are of a different class, being expressly matters of divine revelation.

The doctrine of the eternal manhood of Jesus Christ in heaven, is one so full of heavenly consolation to the tried believer that he ought to give the more earnest heed to that which is revealed; and it is as full of heavenly instruction as any truth revealed to our understandings, and so well calculated to build up believers in their most holy faith that we shall find a little patient attention to the two or three truths asserted in Scripture will well repay whatever amount of consideration we may bestow upon so important a topic.

In the first place, we are to consider the Sonship of Christ as eternal. His eternal generation is coeval with that of the Father's eternity. Here is our starting point. He is one with the Father in all that can be said of the Father. It is the Son of God, the eternal Father, who took our nature into personal union with himself of whom we are speaking; his Sonship is his distinct divine personality. And of himself he not only said, "Before Abraham was I Am," but also, "The Son abideth ever." He ever was the Son of God, and ever will be so. In whatever character and form he is exhibited to us, whether as a servant, mediator, priest, or sacrifice, he is the eternal Son of God.

Our text confirms this grand truth. In speaking of Christ as the Son of Man, the apostle says, "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Heb. vii. 24), his argument being, that Jesus being the Son of God eternally with the Father, was by the appointment of the Father constituted the apostle and high priest of our profession, and is said to be a Son over his own house—"Whose house are we." (Heb. iii. 6.) Moses was faithful as a servant, but the servant abideth not, as Jesus himself said. This point the apostle takes up, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (Heb. iv. 14.) And the apostle lays great stress, not merely on the divine power of his priesthood, but also and more emphatically upon the fact that we have an high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, *because he* was

Digitized by Google

in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Verse 15.) "Who in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being (in his manhood) made perfect, he (the *Son* of God) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. v. 7–9.) "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God and his people."

Now in these and other similar passages we have before us the truth of which the ascension of our Lord was the pledge and confirmation—namely, that in some unspeakable manner, human feelings still exist in the heart of Christ now seated in glory as they did in the days of his humiliation; that *human nature* has in a real, however inexpressible sense, a representative before the throne of God; that he who was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem lived in Nazareth, journeyed from place to place in Galilee and Judea, endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, who offered up himself in his true human body as a sacrifice for sins, is ever present to plead the merits of that sacrifice. As a faithful and merciful high priest he appears there to represent before the eternal throne of God the Father, the true cases and conditions of his people exactly as we feel them, and more correctly than we could do if we were present. In Jesus Christ we have an advocate with the Father; he ever liveth to make intercession for all who come unto God the Father by him. His advocacy is perpetual; so that as long as sin shall last, so shall his intercession; and, therefore, he is able to save to the uttermost, not only to the last sinful act or thought, but also to the last shade of guilt that shall cloud the conscience of the last sinner who shall come unto the Father by him.

The eternal manhood of our Lord Jesus Christ we find spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. It is the same truth, but a different application of it. The resurrection of Christ is there set forth as the pledge of the resurrection of his church. Christ is not merely *a risen man*, but *risen humanity*, the first fruits of those who slept, and of all who in like manner shall awake, being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. *He dieth no more;* in other words, as in our text, *he ever liveth*. Death hath no more dominion over him, therefore its dominion over the

Digitized by Google

church is broken. Thus it is manifest that the truth of all such assertions and the contemplation of the mortality of our race and of the havoc made by death in the dearest of human bonds, depend upon the fact, upon which also depends the perpetual priesthood and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ—namely, his eternal manhood.

Do not let us suppose we are speaking of things taken for granted. I rather think we are too prone to think and believe in this matter something short of this great truth—expecting to see the Son of God in heaven *instead* of *him* whom Stephen saw, even the Son of Man—to regard the life of our Lord after his ascension as merged in the unity of the Godhead, instead of considering it as in some way *the continuation* of that human life which he lived here upon earth for us men and for our salvation. Against such imperfect belief, which robs us of much of the source of spiritual peace and comfort, we may in this subject find solid ground for adoring gratitude and praise. It was, indeed, granted to Stephen to see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God, and also, after the others had ceased to see him, to the apostle Paul as one born out of due time. But how and in what form did these favoured ones see him? Was it not in that same veritable body which was pierced with nails and the spear, and which after his resurrection the disciples saw and handled, and beheld him leave the earth and ascend into heaven? Doubtless in each instance it was a reality in itself and a supernatural revelation to both Stephen and Paul. It could not be an imaginated person, nor would it be a representation of something which did not actually exist. Hallucinations of the brain may exist, but they are not of this character; they centre in self. Spiritual revelations of Christ lead us more into the knowledge of his person and work, to feel the power of his resurrection accomplished in our hearts and consciences, filling our souls with holy longings, praise, and adoration.

We need not say much concerning the manner in which the glory of Christ's manhood in heaven is seen by those who have gone before us. They see him as he is, and they are like him. They see him in the glory which he had before the world was, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, the personal embodiment of grace and truth. He is, in his person as the Son of God, as much the impersonation of all the divine attributes as the

Digitized by Google

Father and the Spirit; for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

In contemplating the Saviour upon earth, in all his weakness and depth of self-abasement for our sakes, the chief matter is to observe how the divine glory made itself visible to those with whom he was associated; for John expressly states, "And we saw his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." So contrariwise, in contemplating the Saviour in heaven, the chief thing to be done is to grasp the conception of his *continual* possession of that nature which he had when on earth. Unquestionably a glorified body, that is not at all disputed, but his being in the possession of those faculties which distinguish his nature from that of angels, that nature being essentially human, in every sense of the word, in a glorified state. For instance, all that we understand by the word "heart," comprising human affection, sympathy, and all that measure of understanding which enters into what the feelings of others are, I mean of those who are yet in an unglorified state, those of the mystical members of his body, the church of God on earth. His being touched with the feeling of our infirmities; the remembrance of his own temptation when on earth—that condition of his human nature which caused him to feel the various woes and sorrows which exist by reason of sin; in other words, his human experience, which he derived by reason of his humiliation when on earth. This he still retains, and will never lose. His human experience, though he is the highly exalted Lamb of God on the throne of his Father, is the ground of his being such a merciful High Priest for us in things pertaining to God, because *he can have and has* compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way, and who are compassed with infirmity. I am aware that in the matter of purging sin and guilt from the conscience, believers have not the difficulty to grasp the great truth of sin being forgiven by virtue of his propitiatory sacrifice; for the Holy Ghost, when he enlightens a sinner to seek salvation in the Son of God, leads him to the blood of sprinkling, and assures him of divine forgiveness. It is, if I may so say, an easier truth to grasp; we lay hold of it sooner, I say, sooner than we can lay hold of the equally blessed truth, the heart of a glorified Christ sympathising with his suffering saints on earth. But when by faith we can believe it, and say, with Mr. Hart,

Digitized by Google

"That human heart he still retains,
Though throned in highest bliss;
And feels each tempted member's pains,
For our affliction's his,"

what joy and pleasure we experience! Dr. Watts, too, the prince of poets, expresses the same thought; and many of the Lord's dear people have been comforted by it when singing:

"He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Pour'd out his cries and tears;
And, in his measure, feels afresh
What every member bears."

O, this is a precious truth to realise when in sorrow, when passing through deep waters, when called to walk through fire! to feel we have the human sympathies and divine presence of a glorious Christ! This is true experimental religion; this is what I want you, dear friends, to know something of; faith in his name, faith in the perpetuity of his human nature, a realisation of his sympathy when we are placed in circumstances to need what he only can impart. If the Lord Jesus Christ be really ascended into heaven, and is set down on the right hand of God, doubtless his session is glorious and his person is divine. His sympathy for us on earth cannot mar his glory or blessedness. His pity and compassion originates no painful emotions in his loving breast, as in ours; that is impossible. *We*, on earth, have painful emotions, in sympathising with our suffering fellow-creatures, by reason of our weakness and infirmities, occasioned by sin; but nothing of this sort can be felt in a glorified and triumphant state. It is true we cannot at present see or imagine what that glory is in which Jesus is enthroned, yet we have no difficulty in believing it. We believe in his kingdom, power, and glory; but do we as fully believe that he is the High Priest and Apostle of our profession, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities? I say, do we believe in his human sympathy and divine intercession?

Here, then, you see is a practical, experimental use we make of the doctrine of Christ's manhood being eternal. We are upon earth, and he in heaven. What is the medium of communication? What is the channel through which the human sympathies of a glorified Jesus flow to his suffering saints on earth? The Holy Ghost the Comforter. He takes of the things of Christ, and reveals them unto us. By faith, which is his own gift,

Digitized by Google

and the life of which he carries on with power, the soul is enabled to lay hold of the great truth and to realise its blessedness. First we see, "To as many as believe in his name, he giveth power to become the sons of God." If we are the children of God, that is, *manifested* to be the children of God, *by faith in Christ Jesus*, we have been made partakers of the divine nature; for, being born of God, we are made like him, being born of the Spirit; and this the apostle Peter himself asserts. (2 Pet. i. 4.) That divine nature brings us into relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, even as the assumption of our nature brought him into relationship with us. His union with our human nature, and our union with his divine nature not only forms a bond of relationship and of union between him and us, but it also constitutes a channel of heavenly communication from God to us. Jesus is our elder brother; he is gone before us, he is gone to prepare a place for us, that where he is there we shall be also. According to his own gracious word, he has prayed the Father that, in his personal absence, we may have another Comforter, who is permanently to abide with each member of his mystic body whilst on earth. This is the Spirit of truth, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father sends in the name of Christ, to teach us all things, and to bring to our remembrance his divine teachings. He it is who sends the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, to us from the Father. He, the Holy Spirit, takes of the things of Christ, and testifies of him. There was an expediency in the economy of salvation that the Lord Jesus should go away, and until that condition of the covenant was fulfilled, it was impossible for the Comforter to come unto us. Well, we are assured that Jesus hath departed; we have all the evidence that true believers need, that Jesus hath ascended up on high, far above all principality and power, and is sat down on the throne of the Majesty on high; and we have, we humbly hope, some precious proofs that he hath given us of his Spirit. In whatever degree these proofs may exist in us they are tokens of his work in our hearts, and of his indwelling within us. The channel of divine communication through which flows the human sympathies of a glorified Christ to his suffering saints on earth is the permanent indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter in the heart of every regenerated child of God. As whatever *we know* of divine things is revealed unto us by his

Digitized by Google

Spirit, so whatever *we feel* is applied unto us by the same Spirit. FAITH is a matter of *personal experience* in the believer. It is not a principle of *thinking*, but of *believing*, and of *trusting*. It is the gift of the Spirit; for he is the Spirit of faith. HOPE is also a matter of personal experience. The believer has no sure hope but what he has some ground for; little or much, it is through the power of the Holy Ghost. LOVE is pre-eminently a matter of personal experience; it is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* LIFE is another matter of personal experience, and of feeling too; for as there is no life without feeling, so there is no true religion without life—divine life; life in the soul manifested by acts of faith, hope, and love, each of which are the gifts of the Spirit, and are exercised, known, and felt in the heart and conscience of every regenerated child of God according to the good pleasure of the heavenly Father's will. The life of God in the soul, you see, is manifested by the gifts of the Spirit—faith, hope, and love. These gifts become, in the personal experience, the *receiving graces* which enable the exercised believer to lay hold of, to apprehend, the things of Christ which the Holy Ghost reveals and testifies. To testify, is to apply and bring home to the soul, with an indubitable witness, the truth, power, comfort, peace, and any other blessing which Jesus, by his Spirit, shall impart in seasons of darkness, desertion, distress, grief, or tribulation of any kind. I have not time to quote Scripture confirmatory of every sentence I have uttered, but you will find them founded on the Lord's own words, especially in his valedictory discourse. As a disciple and a servant of the Lord, I feel that that discourse is addressed to me, upon which I am to find, first, for myself, and next, as a teacher, matter for heavenly food to be communicated to the living soul. Thus, you see, the Church of God is a gainer by Christ's ascension to heaven. We have thereby gained his intercession, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the preparation of a place for each individual member; and not only so, he has also made it the condition of his coming again to receive us unto himself, that where he is, there we may be also. If any man serve the Lord Christ, and follow him, where he is there also his servant be. If any man serve

* Life, in its essence, unquestionably exists before its manifestations; but it is here spoken of *last*, because its individual acts are *first* perceived as indications of its existence.

Digitized by Google

him, that man will the Father honour. (John xii. 26.) What food for hope is here! What a promise! What food for faith! Are we his servants? and are we following him? and are we living upon him? You know what Paul said: "The life I now live I live by faith on the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) This statement of the apostle includes all the circle of truths contained in the incarnation of God's eternal Son—his love, pity, grace manifested in his taking our nature, redeeming us from all iniquity, his life, death, and resurrection, precisely answer to and satisfy all those spiritual needs of which we, as spiritual beings, have been made sensible. For instance, the consciousness of sin, the guilt that presses like a heavy load, the fear of God's wrath against us, the terrors of his law, knowing that it is holy, just, and good; the feeling of our weakness, the knowledge of our helplessness and destitution, yet our hopes fixed in the love of Christ, the desire of union with God, the hope of immortality; indeed, all the thoughts, feelings, and conclusions which a mind renewed by the Spirit of God possesses and enjoys, are all made bright and hopeful from the facts of the personal history of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was manifested to take away our sin; to destroy the works of the devil. In him was manifested the love of God, that we might live through him. We live upon the Son of God in proportion as we realise these facts in our own experience; by *believing*, not by *thinking;* having a *feeling* sense that we do know these things for ourselves, and have some enjoyment of their preciousness.

O that is a poor, wretched religion that consists only of notions and fancies. I know there are many persons who say "that if we believe what God has said in his word, we are to take the comfort of it, and that is all we are to do; and that if we are looking for what we call experience, we are deceiving ourselves with imaginary frames and feelings, and are living upon them." Now, my dear friends, do not be satisfied with merely a notional belief. You will find no comfort in that. Be not contented with anything less than an experimental acquaintance of everthing that Christ has done; and as for living upon frames and feelings, why, you know you cannot live *without them;* but that is a very different thing from living *upon them.* That would be living upon your experience—living upon yourself. No, you are to live upon what Christ has done for

Digitized by Google

you, so far as Christ has revealed himself to you, and what the Spirit has applied of the work of Jesus to your soul. His doing, his dying, his rising, his sitting at his Father's right hand, is food for your faith, your hope, and your love, his perpetual priesthood, and sacrifice ever availing, because of *the perpetuity of his manhood*, which is the ground into which faith casts the anchor of the soul; it is both sure and stedfast, and entereth into that within the vail. Now, the perpetuity of his manhood is constituted by the eternity of his personality as the Son of God. He ever was the Son of God before he became incarnate. He ever will be the incarnate Son of God. He is the author of eternal redemption for all who are seeking life and salvation in his name. He saves to the uttermost, the boundary of which no human thought can define or conceive. God himself has set none. Shall doubt, unbelief, or sin dare venture to set a limit to a seeking sinner's hope in Christ? It is the work of the devil; his object is to cause despair, but he is a liar, and there is no truth in him. He will harass and hunt the soul to death if he can, but God's eye is upon him; he can go no further than his chain will permit. "For the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord, and set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." Jesus still lives. He sits upon the throne of the eternal Father. Every foe, every enemy, shall be made his footstool. Tried soul, look up. Jesus, in his eternal manhood, is interceding for thee. His advocacy will prevail; thy foes shall be smitten upon the cheek-bone; thy fears shall be checked, and thy soul shall be comforted with the revelation of the fact that thy sins are all forgiven, and thou shalt stand before the throne of God in heaven, clothed with the spotless righteousness of the Lamb of God.

What an ocean of love, grace, and mercy there is in the eternal manhood of Christ to every timid, trid believer on earth! He sees before him consolation without a bottom or a shore; it is infinite! What an ocean of heavenly anticipation there is also to the believer just treading upon the verge of the mystic river; while to the sainted, the glorified believer, this boundless ocean will never be comprehended, for throughout eternity he will never get beyond its margin. In a word, the eternal manhood of Christ will be an ocean of pleasure to all the redeemed family of heaven; eternity will be but a per-

Digitized by Google

petual unfolding of the glories of the Lamb exalted on his Father's throne.

Such are some of the contemplations which we may fairly indulge upon such a glorious theme. We might enlarge, but we must bear in mind the other portion of Holy Writ which we have taken into connection with the text just considered. We are led, by a sort of natural transition, to reflect upon the strong consolation which believers have in the immutability of God's promise, and the hope that is set before us in the Gospel; the words are —"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

We have in this passage an assemblage of images, figures, and illusions, which the more we look upon them, the more we are astonished at the vast and comprehensive mind of the apostle. An uninspired man could not write like this, it would be impossible; and ordinary readers could only be bewildered with the multitude of ideas compressed into so small a compass of words.

There are certain great truths set before us, which to the believer in Jesus becomes the sure foundation of his faith, hope, and love. As Christ is the object of faith, the object we love, so is he also the object of our hope, which hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

Hope is here compared to an *anchor:* the ship is supposed to be in sight of the harbour, but owing to either the lowness of the tide, or a strong wind, it cannot sail into it; but the anchor is *carried within* the harbour, and is secured safely. Whatever storms are without, however much the ship may be tossed, it is safely moored.

The *hope* set before us alludes to the method provided for the temporary safety of the Jewish manslayer when flying to the city of refuge. All along the roads leading thereto, were placed sign-posts, with the significant and encouraging words plainly inscribed, "Refuge," so that he that reads might run, when in danger of being overtaken by the avenger of blood. Here we have in the words before us, the state of the exercised soul provided for in the glorious Gospel of the grace of God. The self-convicted criminal fleeing for refuge to lay hold upon the

Digitized by Google

hope set before him. This laying hold of the hope set before us, has an allusion also to the horns of the altar, those branches or hooks set at each corner of the brazen altar upon which the offerings of burnt sacrifices were made; if a criminal, hotly pursued, were to get once within the sacred precints of the temple and lay hold of these horns, justice must hold back the sword of vengeance; mercy secures the life of the refugee, for the time being, until inquisition shall be made.

Then, again, here is introduced an allusion to a Forerunner; one, who in olden times, more especially in the East, was employed to run before, clear the way, and announce the approach of some dignified personage, so that he might be received with all due honours. It will be easily supposed, that the Forerunner, however great his ability for his work, was never superior to those whom he served; his skill, and not his dignity or title, was what fitted him for the office, he would, therefore, be considered less in dignity than the person he was employed to announce. "The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."

Then, again, to crown all, the person of Jesus is mentioned, "made an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec, as having entered"—Where? within the vail, the vail of the holy of holies, in the temple. Here is hope as an anchor cast within the vail, and Jesus the Forerunner has entered into it for us. May the Holy Spirit lead our minds to see the great truth set forth in the complex figures used by the apostle.

What we now wish to consider more particularly is, the character of our most glorious Lord in the inferior position of a Forerunner. Where shall we find a parallel in the word of God? I know only of one; I refer to the prophet Elijah; who, though superior (by his office) in dignity to the king, nevertheless undertook of his own accord to run before Ahab and announce his approach. This was doing him great honour, while at the same time his so doing was, under the painfully irritated state of the nation, at least to be considered conciliatory; he does Ahab honour, he brings good tidings of rain, the people are appeased, and their present wants are provided for.

So here, in our text, we see Jesus, our great high priest, entered within the vail, the holy of holies, before the mercy seat, with his own blood for us, in the presence of God. This great personage, the exalted Lord, in his

Digitized by Google

eternal manhood, has gone before us into the heavenly glory, not only to do us honour, but also essential service, both *for us* where he is gone, but *in us* while we are following after. Surely with such a grand announcement and preparation, we shall have an entrance ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We consider, then, the character of Jesus as our forerunner loses none of its dignity; but, in fact, raises him more in our estimation. What condescension is thereby manifested. "You know," says the apostle, "the grace of our Lord Jesus, who though he was rich, yet he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." And in order to be the Forerunner, to save his church, and bring many sons unto glory, it was necessary, as they were flesh and blood, he should take part of the same, and it was necessary that, as the captain of their salvation, he should be made perfect through suffering.

Now Jesus may be considered as our Forerunner, inasmuch as he is the *first fruits of mankind glorified.* He is the first man who died, rose again, and entered into glory. *He was born;* and he is the first born man *without sin.* He was *made* of a woman, made under the law, but *not born of women*—that is, of successive generations of sinful man, (as is said of John the Baptist, and is true of all mankind.*) He was in his human nature, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. *He led a life of manual labour,* yet was always about his Father's business. *He had experience of human sufferings,* of humanity in its lowest state and condition; he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself; he pleased not himself; he bore the anguish of unmerited wicked reproach and the burden of others' sins. He was removed from the world by a violent death. He died, but saw no corruption. He died for us. He was buried for us. *He rose again from the dead.*

* This is a most important distinction; it is an irrefragible argument against those who aver that the human nature of Jesus was liable to sin or was capable of sinning.

Digitized by Google

He rose for our justification. He is our Forerunner to eternal life and the heavenly glory; to put on incorruption, immortality, and a glorified manhood. *He ascended to heaven.* He opened the way; he is gone to prepare a place for us. We follow after; our hope, as sinners, is excited and encouraged by seeing the way made clear; "refuge, refuge," is set before us in the hope of the gospel. As Jesus is as the great High Priest of our profession, he has entered within the vail for us as our Forerunner; we follow after as priests; the Church of God is a nation of priests, and shall take part in the solemn service of everlasting love and thanksgiving. Every true believer shall enter the vail, the holy of holies; they shall enter into the deeper mysteries of redeeming love and grace. They do not enter in with their own blood, but by virtue of his; it is sprinkled over the mercy-seat, the cherubim of glory overshadow it, the perfections of Jehovah harmoniously meet in the propitiation of the blood of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." As our Jesus has rose again, we stand for ever justified and cannot be condemned; therefore "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Happy thought! Jesus our glorious Forerunner has entered into the heaven of heavens; He will come again and receive us to himself, that where he is we shall be also.

Now, dear friends, what can be said by way of improvement upon these great truths which we have tried to point out? I confess, in attempting such a task, I feel myself unequal to the occasion; I see a sublimity and grandeur beyond my power fully to describe. Such themes as these demand the tongue of an angel, or at least the tongue of the eloquent; there is such an overpowering sense of one's own unfitness when we speak of such glorious realities; and instead of one's tongue being as the pen of a ready writer, our utterances seem more like the chattering of a sparrow. Yet, I must say, however, that when the Spirit of Truth takes of the things of Christ and reveals them unto us, we soon find the glorious Lord becomes to us a place of broad rivers and streams, and we are wafted along by the sweet and loving influences of his Spirit into the haven of delight, and find

Digitized by Google

celestial pleasure in contemplating the great mystery of godliness: "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

If, then, I might add a word or two in order to close this discourse, I would select three thoughts, which I think are fairly inferred from what has been advanced. 1. The exaltation of Christ, the God-man Mediator. 2. The counteraction of the opposition made by the enemies of the Church of God; and 3. The needy circumstances of the Church militant are fully met, spiritually and providentially.

1. *The exaltation of Christ, the God-man Mediator.*—When we speak of Christ's exaltation to the throne of the majesty on high, it is in reference to his mediatorial character exclusively. In his personality as the Son of God he is essentially co-equal with the Father in grace, power, and glory; and, consequently, could admit of no exaltation. When, therefore, the Son of God undertook the salvation of the Church, he "made himself of no reputation, but took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 7-11.) Here we see the humiliation and the exaltation of the Mediator are essentially connected. His glory is the reward of his sufferings. By virtue of his mediatorial capacity he sustained the threefold offices of prophet, priest, and king. These offices are inseparably connected in the great work of salvation; they are alike essential and indispensable. His prophetical office taught men the nature of his person, his priestly office the nature of his work, and his kingly office the nature of the glory he now possesses. A name above every name, as a title of dignity amongst men, a king. Jesus is King of kings, King of saints, King of glory. "To this end," he said, "was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." His kingly dignity is the perfection of his work, and a crowning with honour his obedience unto the death. When we contemplate the end

Digitized by Google

for which Christ came into the world—the salvation of sinners, the execution of his Father's will, the voluntariliness and the triumphant success of his undertaking, we cannot but take up his own words and say, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?"

2. *The counteraction of the opposition made by the enemies of the Church of God.*—The coronation of a king is a confirmation of his authority to rule and to command obedience. The dominion of Christ is universal, being King of kings and Lord of lords; he rules over angels, men, death, and hell. "The LORD said unto my Lord, *sit thou* at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. These enemies of the Lord Christ are also the enemies of the Church in its militant state. The work of grace in the heart has many enemies; enemies to its internal operations, enemies to its external influences; those arising from those indwelling corruptions which wage incessant warfare against the quickening, sanctifying, and comforting work of the Spirit. The law, as a covenant of works, is an adversary to the work of grace; it demands the death of the sinner, slays the peace of the soul, and holds its victim in its own right and possession. Satan and his emissaries are numerous, subtle, powerful enemies; they assail by their temptations, accusations, and persecutions. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The world, with its enticements and terrors, its smiles and frowns, are ever attempting to sap and undermine the principles of our stability and peace. Besides all these, we have the declared and avowed enemies who oppose the dominion of the Lord Christ. "We will not have this man to rule over us." Popery, Mohammedanism, Heathenism, and every other sort of infidelity, stand forth with unblushing effrontery to withstand HIM who goes forth conquering and to conquer; these, with Satan at their head, wage war with the Lamb." Death, the last of foes, by threatening to execute the curse of the broken covenant, awakens slavish fears, and holds in bondage, by pointing to the grave as its interminable stronghold. But all these enemies,

Digitized by Google

spiritual, carnal, infernal, internal, and external, numerous and powerful as they all are, are under the dominion of HIM who sitteth on the throne for ever and ever. Their final overthrow is demanded by the honour of the Saviour himself, as well as declared by the word of Jehovah himself. Jesus who is the Saviour of his people is the conqueror over all their foes. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

Shout, ye little flock, and blessed,
You on Jesus' throne shall rest;
There your seat is now prepared,
There *your kingdom and reward.*

3. The *needy circumstances of the Church Militant are fully met, spiritually and providentially.* In the accomplishment of the work of salvation, the mediatorial character of Christ is complete. Though he is enthroned in highest bliss, his combined offices of prophet, priest, and king are ever available to every saint on earth. Daily we lack wisdom and need his teaching, both as to the way of salvation and the way of his providence; daily we need pardon and peace, and deliverance from a sense of condemnation; daily do we need deliverance from Satanic temptations and all the evil workings of our depraved nature. And herein we do rejoice, our Jesus ever lives, he sits a priest upon his throne; he is our Intercessor, our advocate, and our king. He is a merciful and sympathising High Priest, he is our glorious Intercessor, ever interceding for all his saints, the weakest as well as the strong; he perfumes all our sighs, tears, cries, and groans with his prevailing merits, his immaculate person, as God-man mediator, his complete atonement and his perfect righteousness. Here is strong consolation for all who are looking to him as their prophet, priest, and king. In this three-fold capacity he sympathises with all our needs in those external circumstances which make us feel weakness, poverty, and wretchedness. He is ever with his church in the wilderness; with them as they are passing through the waters, with them when they are called to walk through the fire; he manifests his divine power in restraining the rushing flood and the kindling heat of the flame; his human heart is manifested by the comforting assurance that he knows and feels that which afflicts them; he supplies their daily wants, and controls the evil of every day as it

Digitized by Google

comes on; he supplies strength, energy, patience, faith, hope for every time of trial, long or short. He not only upholds all things by the word of his power, but he watches with deepest interest and unbounded sympathy every circumstance into which his people are brought. Each individual believer's state and wants has his constant eye and care; nothing escapes his notice. The secret of all things working together for good is because he is the king of glory. Everything is timed and measured by his infinite wisdom and goodness. He hath an unchangeable priesthood, he is able to save to the uttermost, he ever liveth to make intercession. Here is our ground for hope. Can you and I venture to say, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

"O for a sight, a pleasing sight,
Of our almighty Father's throne;
There sits our Saviour crown'd with light,
Clothed in a body like our own.

"Adoring saints around him stand,
And thrones and powers before him fall;
The God shines gracious through the Man,
And sheds sweet glories on them all.

"Oh, what amazing joys they feel,
While to their golden harps they sing,
And sit on every heavenly hill,
And spread the triumphs of their king!

"When shall the day, dear Lord, appear,
That I shall mount to dwell above,
And stand and bow amongst them there,
And view thy face, and sing thy love?"

WATTS.

GADSBY & ARNOLD, STEAM PRINTERS, CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.

Digitized by Google

THE

PRESENCE & SYMPATHY OF JESUS WITH HIS PEOPLE

WHEN PASSING THROUGH THE WATERS AND WALKING THROUGH THE FIRE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Morning, March 3rd, 1861.

REVISED.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."—ISA. XLIII. 2.

FEW portions of God's word are more often quoted as suiting believers in circumstantial troubles than the one now read. The promise of the Lord's presence when applied to the soul in a time of deep affliction and in fiery trials is most supporting and encouraging. Faith views the promise as coming from him who is faithful that has promised, and it leans upon his word; and though surrounded with sorrows even to the very neck, the believer feels that sinking in them is altogether out of the question. God's "I wills" and "shall nots," bear his head above water, even in the deepest part of the stream, and they preserve him from the raging flame of the fiercest fire through which he has to walk.

So far as the preacher is concerned, this is what he wants to realise for himself; his coming here has reminded him of a deep family sorrow he endured in connection with this place some years since; and the position he now occupies for the first time in this pulpit, adds an intensity to the pungency of his present feelings.

Looking at the words of the text now read, we shall find that its primary or historical meaning is supplied to us in the context. The people of Judah had before them

Digitized by Google

the prospect of the Assyrian armies coming to Jerusalem and carrying them away captives into the land of Assyria. First, let me refer you to the 8th chapter, and read from the 5th verse to the 8th, "Jehovah spake also unto me again, saying, Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."

Now, let us read the two last verses of the 42nd chapter, and the verse preceding our text: "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not Jehovah; he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart. But now thus saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob; and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

Here, then, you see, in the first portion is the declaration of Jehovah as to the King of Assyria coming upon the land as *waters* with the strength of a sweeping flood; and in the second portion we have pointed out the hand of *him* who had done it. In the verse preceding our text, lest those who were to be banished far away should imagine that the Lord had utterly forsaken them, he assures them most positively he still owned them as his people, and he graciously calls upon them to "fear not;" and in the words of our text he makes this most assuring and comforting promise of his presence and of his power through all the sweeping desolations through which they have to pass. Indeed, the whole chapter is filled with gracious promises and assurances, and predictions of future blessedness. The design of Jehovah was evidently to make his people feel that while he chastised them for their national sins, he would correct them for their departures from him, and whilst under his Fatherly rod he

Digitized by Google

would still preserve them as a nation, through all the vicissitudes of invasions, banishments, and poverty; and we cannot but remark that to this day the Jews are still preserved as a people distinct and not reckoned among the nations wheresoever they are scattered. The Assyrian and Roman invasions made vast devastations, but have failed to exterminate this remarkable race. God's purposes of love and mercy towards his people have yet farther to be revealed ere the seed of Abraham, the friend of God, shall be permitted to be extinct.

We will now endeavour to consider the subject before us as applicable to ourselves. It is a promise of comfort in tribulation; the promise of the presence and sympathy of Jesus with his people when passing through the waters and walking through the fire. This precious portion of God's word is as equally true and as merciful to God's spiritual Israel now as ever it was to his ancient people the Jews. In doing this, we will notice, 1, The circumstances stated; 2, the promise made under such circumstances; and 3, some particular instances of its truth.

But before I enter into the first particular, we must ascertain who the persons are referred to by the pronoun used in the text—*thou*. For if we omit this important point, we may possibly run ourselves into an egregious error, and so mislead those to whom the text does not apply; for it must not be for a moment supposed that the promise is made to all persons who are in tribulation. Our own observation makes us familiar with the sad fact that there are many thousands of persons whose circumstances may be aptly described as passing through the waters, and as walking through fire, but to whom, alas! not a word of comfort is promised. Not a ray of hope beams upon them; for all their days they eat in darkness, and have much sorrow and wrath with their sickness.

I have already said that the text contains a promise of the presence and sympathy of Jesus with his people in tribulation. The people thus known as his people are distinguished from all others. They are followers of Jesus. They follow him in the way of his commandments, in the ordinances of his house. They love his person, his house, his word. They love one another, and by this they are known to be his disciples. They have faith in his name; they trust the whole matter of their salvation to him alone. They live by faith on him as the Son

Digitized by Google

of God, who gave himself for them, who died for them, and who rose again for their justification. They have been renewed in the spirit of their minds, being begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. They are called out of darkness into marvellous light, translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son; completely separated from the world in its spirit, pursuits, and pleasures. They are pilgrims in a desert land, journeying onwards and homewards, but the way throughout is inhospitable and cheerless, for the world to them is directly opposed. They are hated by it, and none of the things in it afford them the least satisfaction. Besides all this, their own evil and corrupt nature withstands them in the way. Satan confronts them with his subtle and fiery darts:

> "Temptations everywhere annoy,
> And sins and snares their peace destroy;
> Their earthly joys are from them torn,
> And often absent God they mourn."

These are some of the principal characteristics of the people here spoken of in our text, and to whom the promise is made. We now proceed to consider:

I. The circumstances stated: *Passing through the waters, Walking through the Fire.* Water and Fire are natural elements, without which we could not live, and when employed by us in the proportions we need, we find them the source of much comfort and are our servants for good; but when they come upon us beyond the power of our control they not only become our masters, but prove the source of much danger, disaster and evil. In neither the one nor the other can the human body feel any appropriate element except as we can command and regulate their natural forces. Water and fire are not like the air we breathe or the earth on which we stand; for if they get beyond their boundary and become of sufficient volume their power is irresistible and bids defiance to all human agency; a power only that is beyond nature can withstand the sweeping nature of the one or the consuming nature of the other.

1. *Waters* set forth troubles, because of their cheerlessness and the coldness of their nature. They comprise

Digitized by Google

afflictions in body, bereaving providences, losses, crosses, failures, want of employment, poverty in all its endless ramifications, sudden calamities, overwhelming calamities, and whatever else comes in the nature of disappointments, creating sorrow of heart and grief of mind. *Passing through*, implies not only the course through which we have to go, but it implies danger and overwhelming force, as waters in an accumulated body and force threaten danger and destruction to anything that stands in its way as an obstruction; so to human beings their coming upon them, or their having to go through them, implies not only danger, but threatens destruction. Drowning is inevitable where the irresistibleness of waters are felt and help is not at hand. This is felt to be the more hazardous and dangerous when we consider what is to be understood and intended by the term waters; it means a confluence of streams and floods from various parts meeting together in one place, creating a kind of whirling force that bids defiance to anything like a passage being forced through them.

2. *Rivers* set forth and imply one continued stream defined by its banks, bounded on either side, by which a course of water is hemmed in and narrowed within a given compass. A long continued course of afflictive events may be likened to a river; it may be deep, or wide; so sometimes the circumstances in which men are placed may be fitly compared to rivers. Rivers are often used as a similitude of long continued blessings, referring sometimes to the love or goodness of God, the blessings of God's word and other characteristics of a gospel state, but evidently, in the text, it means that long course of providential dispensation which brings a trial in its endurance and passing through as contrary to comfort.

3. *Floods* set forth a wide spread of overflowing water or a breaking forth of pent-up waters, bursting forth from its bounds, sweeping all before it, rolling on until all its volume is completely spent. Thus overwhelming and sudden calamities are likened, desolating in their nature, leaving nothing behind, not even a wreck to mark the spot where once peace, plenty, and prosperity had its standing. Soul troubles are well compared to waters—so is temptation—burden of guilt. We need only refer to the 69th Psalm, where David thus indicates his danger and his terror of the waters which he uses

Digitized by Google

as a figure of his distress: "Save me, O God, for the waters have come into my soul." He might, perchance, refer to what we have been told of the dropsy, if the complaint is within the chest, the water rises to the heart: life is at once extinguished. How often God's people feel that immediate death is threatened, unless God interposes his delivering hand.

4. *Fire* is the contrary element to water, equally destructive and equally unmanageable when its power has accumulated; its nature is to burn up, consume, and to destroy the identity of the substance wherever its power has the mastery. On sensitive objects, such as possess animal life, a flame of fire is felt to burn and to create an intensity of pain. The skin cannot endure it one moment of time—unlike water, the skin is waterproof so long as the strength of the body can withstand it, but fire kindles, scorches, burns and torments beyond the power of endurance. Thus the figure of fire is employed to signify oppression, tyrranny, rage, fury, malice, and persecutions of our enemies. Sharp trials, sharp afflictions, whatsoever tries our faith and feelings, or consumes our hopes, destroys our prospects, and leaves nothing but the *ashes* of former comforts to tell the tale.

II. We come now to consider *the promise that is here made to the Lord's people under the deep sorrows and fiery trials through which they are called to pass.* "I will be with thee"—the rivers shall not overflow, the fire shall not burn.

Under such circumstances, how suitable, how supporting, and how comforting such a promise! Without it what insupportable misery! He who has made the promise knows all the afflictions and sorrow through which his people have to pass. He who has made the promise knows all the sufferings they have to endure. He who has made the promise knows what they need; he knows how weak and faint they are; he knows how to strengthen and to cheer them; he knows how subject they are to fears, despondency, and unbelief; he knows how to remove their fears; he knows how to assure their hearts and to carry on the work of faith with power. Hence he calls upon them to "Fear not." He gives them the most solid ground why they should not fear—his redeeming love and mercy—"I have redeemed thee." This is just exactly what the soul needs when in trouble

Digitized by Google

and in distress: "Say unto my soul I am thy salvation." And do look again at what Jehovah has condescended to say for their further consolation: "I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Here is personal calling emanating from personal, unconditional election and choice, irrespective of what his people were or what they are, as is evidently implied by the two names of Jacob and of Israel, which I regard as taking in the two conditions in which they may be viewed—1, as they stand in and of themselves, and 2, as they stand in Christ, united to him in covenant love, and experimentally manifested by faith in him. Do they look upon themselves as standing in their Jacob state, weak, sinful, and helpless, unassured of Jehovah's covenant love, the promise is made to them? Do they look upon themselves in their covenanted state as revealed to them by faith and experimentally known to them in the exercises of faith, hope, and love? Still the promise is made to them. The trial of their faith in either case is precious. Hope must be tried, and so must love too; indeed every gift and grace of the Spirit must be tried—tried in order that they may be proved to be the gifts and graces of the Spirit—tried in order that they may be strengthened, and tried that *the very trial itself* shall be found unto praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Now the promise made to them is *one*, whether it be spoken to them under the name of Jacob or of Israel; but experimentally, in its application to the heart, the promise has *two* aspects, according to the condition in which it finds them. Are they in the exercises of fears and unbelief surrounded with terror and dismayed with dark forebodings of the future? The promise is expressly made to them in that character and under such circumstances: "But now, thus saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob, Fear not." "When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee." What more can the tried soul want? Here Jacob is assured of covenant love in the redemption of his person from all evil, and of his eternal union with the Lord God Almighty —"Thou art mine." And now here is the absolute promise of an immutable Jehovah: "I will be with thee." But suppose it be the case of one who has had some sweet proofs of Jehovah's love and power in his own experience, placed in the midst of deep sorrow, care, anxiety, and the direst woe that can befall poor humanity, how

Digitized by Google

adapted, how suitable is this promise found! for how well we know that however much we may have realised our union with Christ, we want the same strength to endure, the same comfort to cheer, for the knowledge of our standing in Christ does not lessen the force of the waters through which we have to pass, nor lessen the heat of the fire through which we have to walk. No, it is God's grace alone, his goodness, his power, that can prevent the force of the one or abate the heat of the other. New circumstances require new grace to meet them. The believer feels he requires grace for every need. His strength and comfort does not flow from his belief that he is saved in the Lord, but from the grace that the Lord gives for the time being, whatever the condition may be. Jacob and Israel have each the same promise of grace from a covenant Jehovah; but their individual enjoyment of that promise may be in some respects modified by the condition and experience which may characterise them as Jacob or Israel. The promise is made to and adapted to, in each case, these two characteristics of the Lord's people.

Now, you tried believers, whether you are Jacobs or Israels, this promise is to show you that under whatever calamities, distresses, or afflictions that may come upon you, they shall not destroy you; they shall not consume you. Jehovah's promise is, I will be with thee. Fear not; thou art not alone. The waters may come; they will come; they must come; but remember Christ is with you. He is with you whilst passing through the waters; he is as much in them as yourself. There can be no condition in which you can be brought but your Lord and Saviour is with you in it. The circumstance may be new to you, but it is not new to him. He has been in it before; he knows all the way; hence, as a guide, how skilful to conduct his people in safety, and bring them through; for we must bear in mind that a passage through waters, that is, floods, and also even in rivers, can only be ventured upon with a skilful pilot, or guide, one who has knowledge of the path, and has had personal experience, all which Jesus possesses—personal knowledge, human experience. In his Person he is divine and almighty—his knowledge is divine, his power is almighty. He maketh a path in the mighty waters, he is mightier than many waters; therefore you are quite safe. No trial too difficult for him to manage, no trouble too overwhelming

Digitized by Google

for him to overcome; for "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." What if, as Job said, "Terrors take hold on you as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night," yet Jesus is with you. You feel the waters take hold of you, yet you are in his hand. Nothing shall force you from his hold; he withstands the flood. The waters shall not overflow thee; his presence and power is all-sufficient. Mr. Horne, in one of his excellent hymns, has said:

"Or if through fierce, consuming fire
The way to endless rest shall lie;
This miracle shalt thou admire—
Before my power the flames shall die!

"Nor even kindle on thee once,
Though seven times hotter than before;
I'm there, my glory to advance,
And thou to wonder and adore."

Now, see here a proof of our union to Christ. He is with his people in their afflictions by virtue of his promise, and that promise originating from his taking us into union with himself. This union is founded in everlasting, immutable love, therefore the application of the promise to the heart, in circumstances of woe and sorrow, affords not only a proof of his sympathy with us in our afflictions, but is a powerful proof of our standing in him —our union to him in love. We commonly say, "A friend in need is a friend indeed." Now Jesus is a friend in need; a friend that loveth at all times; a friend that sticketh closer than a brother: "For in all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." How truly we can say with the psalmist: "If it had not the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up alive when their wrath was kindled against us. Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." (Ps. cxxiv.)

"Sons of God, in tribulation,
Let your eyes your Saviour view;
He's the Rock of your salvation;
He was tried and tempted too,
All to succour
Every tried and tempted, burdened soul."

Digitized by Google

And what a proof of his sympathy, his presence, and his power we have from the fact that his promise does really sustain the spirit while passing through deep waters! Have we not known what it is to be upheld and strengthened by his omnipotent hand? We look back sometimes upon the trials through which we have been brought, and wondered how we endured them. The only explanation that we can give is, Jesus was with us, the God-man, by his power and by his sympathy, kept off the force of the stream, and sustained us in it. This is the perfection of his mediatorial work. His Godhead and his manhood are brought to bear in the experience of every tried believer. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." (Ps. xxxii. 6.) The Lord trieth the righteous, but their trials are of his appointment. "It needs be that we are in heaviness through manifold temptations, floods of great waters, sorrows upon sorrows, yet the sweeping force of these great waters have not come nigh unto us to sweep us away; they have not come nigh unto us by reason of the standard being lifted up against the enemy." Have we not known something of the floods of Satan's temptations; fiery temptations, flood and fire together, now hot, now cold; floods of opposition and persecution from the world and from the professing church; floods and fire from the evil of our own evil hearts, unbelief, murmurings, rebellions, the desperate wickedness of which cannot be known only by him who is taught and instructed by God's Spirit? I say, have we not known something of these things? And how is it that we have not been carried away as with a flood? The only way we can account for it is, the realisation of the promise contained in our text. We have not been borne *above* our trials, but we have been sustained *in* them. We have not been carried *out* of our trials, but we have been brought safe *through* them. The divine power exercised in withholding the force of temptations, afflictions, and sorrows is the proof of Christ's presence. That we have been withheld from resorting to any of those expedients which the men of this world fly to when in trouble and distress is another proof of his presence being with us. The very fact of our troubles leading us to a throne of grace, seeking his help and mercy, is another proof that

Digitized by Google

he has been with us; and also the fact of our looking to him, resting upon his word, resting on his name, is another indubitable proof that he has been with us. "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." "The name of the Lord is a stong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." The promise of Christ being with his people when passing through the waters, and walking through the fire, is divinely needed and divinely made. As there is a divine needs-be for every trial, so there is divine needs-be for the decree that appoints the means of support under it. Divine wisdom and divine goodness harmonise in all the appointments of those floods and fires into which the Lord brings his people, and this is felt and proved in their passing through them. The very fact of their *passing through them* is the realisation of the promise. What further evidence can we need that Jesus is with us—we have been *divinely sustained?* The floods have *not* drowned us; the fire has *not* consumed us.

But before we leave this part of our subject there is one very important fact should be borne in mind, it will help us to realize the true nature of the promise which the Lord has here made to his people; it is this,—troubles of whatever kind, real or imaginary, must always be met with a greater force than they bring; if they are not, they will, like a flood, sweep us away from our present standing and hope. You know that a flood will soon acquire sufficient strength so as to carry away trees, houses, bridges, and whatever else opposes a resistance. If its foundation is not stronger than the flood, there is the danger and the ground of fear. But if it be a rock, for instance, there it stands immoveable; the flood may roll on and dash its furious billows against its opponent, but there it remains. Now, so it is with the believer in the floods of tribulation, circumstantial or spiritual, divine strength enables him to feel as a rock, immoveable; he is not carried away, the promise spoken to his heart gives him strength in his soul, he has a power given him greater than the force of all his troubles, he is enabled to meet them, to resist them, and to get through them, in fact, he overcomes them, for it is evident they do not overcome him. Then it is that such trials become occasions of victory, strength for the day has been given, and grace sufficient for the need is proved; this is how it was that the apostle Paul gloried in tribulation; he had patience given

Digitized by Google

him to bear, his experience strengthened his hope, and hence he was not ashamed, because the love of God was shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. This, you see, is the secret of that power which holds up the believer in the wildest flood or the raging storm. Where the love of God is in the heart, that soul possesses a power that bids defiance to all the powers of earth or hell, because the power of the Holy Ghost is greater than all the forces that they can bring against it.

The same truth holds still more important with relation to such trials that are *as fires* to the soul. With regard to *water*, the oily element of our nature, to a certain extent, renders us impervious to it. Our skin, if I might so say, is waterproof; it resists the penetration which water will unquestionably make wherever it finds an inlet, and it is only when its power is above human strength that the body sinks, or is carried away. But with regard to *fire* it is altogether different; the oily element of our nature that *resists* the entrance of water by the skin is that which *feeds* a flame of fire. There is nothing in the human body that can by nature resist fire or counteract its force. Water or fire are equally destructive to life, but with this difference,—water, in the one case, may destroy life, but it does not destroy the body, the form remains, and it can be identified. Not so with fire. The body, when attacked by the kindling flame, is at once destroyed, consumed, and reduced to ashes, so that identification is impossible. Now see here how suitable the promise: "The flame shall not kindle upon thee." The Lord knows the element of which our nature is composed, he knows all our weaknesses, he will restrain the consuming rage of the flame, his divine power shall be put forth, so that the flame shall not come nigh so combustible and weak a creature as we by nature are. The Lord knowing our weakness exerts his divine power over such circumstances, which otherwise would consume us so completely as to leave nothing but the ashes of our utter ruin and disaster. Here is, then, a promise that the flame shall not kindle upon us; no, not when we are called to walk through it; that is, our circumstances of affliction, trial, and sorrow are made to be the path in which we have to tread, not this side of it, or that side of it, but in the very midst—our own feet must tread every step of the way. Now, when it is the Lord's will to bring us into

Digitized by Google

these cutting sorrows, these grievous trials, these fiery temptations that try our spirits, our faith, our hope, or our love, and we find that our faith does not fail, our hope does not waver, our love still abides—what else can it be but divine faithfulness, divine power, divine love that we realize when passing through and walking in the fire, in the midst of the devouring flame, despairing, it may be, almost of life, and yet brought off more than conquerors through him that hath loved us? You see, dear friends, the metaphors of water and fire, when employed by the Spirit of truth, represent to us great and glorious truths, which make the promise we have before us exceeding great and precious in its application to the believer's circumstances and experience.

III. In the third place, let us *consider some particular instances of the truth in which this exceeding great and precious promise has been demonstrated.*

The case of Jacob, when about to meet his brother Esau, wrestling with a man is too well known to require a minute relation of the circumstances. He had hoped that time had somewhat mellowed down his brother's rage, which he by deception had provoked; but in order to conciliate him and to meet him in peace, he prudently prepares a present, a present fit for a king. A messenger is sent, and he returns with heavy tidings. Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He finds that a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city. He arranges his people and property with all the care that prudence can suggest, and now he retires to pour out his soul unto God. What more can he do? How can he, a mere grazier, with only a staff of drovers, defend themselves against a body of 400 armed men, with an angry man to head them. His danger is like an overwhelming flood, and his fear is like a furnace of fire. Did you mark his prayer? What a model for troubled souls! He refers to the divine leadings, he acknowledges past mercies, his prayer is, "Deliver me from my brother Esau, for I fear him," and he reminds the Lord of the good word on which he hoped, "and thou saidst, I will surely do thee good." His faith kept hold of it, it was the anchor of his soul. If God did not then appear, what was to become of the promise of his faithfulness? We are told, there wrestled a man with him. Who was this man? no mere man, I can assure you. It was the Son of God, the Lord from

Digitized by Google

heaven, though Jacob was ignorant of his name, yet not of his person, for his faith helps him to take hold of him bodily, and to say to him, with a holy boldness that bid defiance to anything like denial, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," and the blessing he sought he obtained; what that blessing was is seen in the fact that Esau's heart was turned towards his brother, he meets him with a kiss of peace, instead of a sword. The mother with the children were preserved alive; blessings positive and blessings negative are given in answer to prevailing prayer. Jacob gives a name to the place where the circumstance occurred, as a *memorial* of Jehovah's wonderful interposition: "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." We do well in marking the places where God appears for us in times of trial and distress. God himself takes a note of it, for all through the Scripture, wheresoever we find the phrase, "the God of Jacob," particularly in the Psalms, it points to this extraordinary deliverance. We are thus reminded that under similar dangers, trials, fears, and distresses the same grace and mercy is still to be found, for the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him.

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do,
Bring relief in greatest straits."

Nor must we forget the history of Joseph. See how this exceeding great and precious promise was realized for *many years*—all through the eventful period from his being sold by his brethren until his release from prison. What floods, what fires, that young man was called to pass through! He *did* pass through; yes, he passed through them all. How was it that he passed through them all? God was with him; "the word of the Lord tried him until the time that his word came." To be sold for a slave by his own brethren was hard to bear, but to be falsely accused and wrongfully imprisoned, to be laid in irons, to have his feet hurt with fetters, year after year, without the slightest hope, humanly speaking, of deliverance, was most trying to faith as well as to flesh and blood. Yet see how his faith stood the test of all those severe trials. That one sentence of his, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" reveals the whole secret of it all. The God of Jacob was his help. He was with

Digitized by Google

him in the pit, he was with him in Potiphar's house, he was with him in the prison, for see, he had the same faith in the interpretatian of a dream belonging to God when he spoke to the butler as when he told his dream to his brethren. He rested in the promise, not the providence; the providence seemed to cross the promise, but Joseph's faith trusted the promise. That faith was God's gift, as was the promise itself. The word of the Lord tried him, but it did not disappoint him; that was impossible. It would be unlike God to raise his people's hopes and disappoint their expectations. Our trials are designed, doubtless, to wean us from all fleshly thoughts and creature dependences. It is sense and sin that creates our pain and disturbs our peace, when clouds come and hids the promise from our view. God's word, however, is immutable, and that faith which he gives his people remains unshaken, notwithstanding the floods and the fires through which they are called to pass. Here, then, is the proof. That our trials, be they ever so long, as was Joseph's, our endurance or patience, as the apostle Paul calls it, arises from the fact that Jehovah is with us. He sustains the faith he gives; faith cannot sustain itself. He preserves the soul from fainting, keeps off the sweeping force of the one and restrains the raging flame of the other.

Now, what we have just remarked is most strikingly seen in the circumstance of the people of Israel passing through the Red Sea. The relation of it in the book of Exodus is somewhat bare of those various incidents spoken of in several other parts of the inspired writings. In the 77th Psalm, from the 16th verse to the end, which is alluded to by the apostle Paul (1 Cor. x. 1), and from the 66th Psalm, verses 6 and 12, it would appear that the passage through the Red Sea was in a terrific thunderstorm, with much lightning and rain. Yet in the very heart of the sea, that is, on the very bed of it, the earth itself, the sea being held back, *there* they praised the Lord, *there* they had a song in the night, *there* did they rejoice in him. The 12th verse has a distinct reference to the manner and the kind of that great deliverance; it was a thunderstorm of no ordinary magnitude. They went through fire and through water, sheets of lightning played round them, the clouds poured out rain, the thunder rolled out God's mighty voice in the skies, and

Digitized by Google

the forked lightning, like arrows, went abroad, striking terror and death in the hearts of their enemies. These fell by thousands, but it came not nigh them. God was mindful of his covenant with Abraham. All nature was laid under tribute to work out deliverances for the seed of Jacob his chosen. "The sea saw it and fled; Jordan was driven back." What! the river Jordan, which is ever rolling its mighty torrent into the Red Sea, though many miles distant, was that held back? Did it cease to flow on that wondrous night? Yes, all nature trembled at the presence of the God of Jacob; but O, how graciously he was with his people throughout that memorable passage of sea and fire. He who was with the church in the wilderness was with them there in the waters and in the fire. Jehovah was there, the rock of Israel. He it was who held the waters back on both sides as walls to make room for them; he it was who gladdened their hearts. They praised his name, they rejoiced in him. Here they realised his presence for themselves. It was the promise made to Joseph: "God shall surely visit you, and ye shall bring up my bones with you." Thus their faith in God was strengthened. They believed his words, they sang his praise. Now, all this is literal truth and figurative of spiritual truth; the letter and spirit of Scripture give but one testimony to the experience of God's people in all ages. The waters shall not overflow, the flame shall not kindle upon one of the saints of God's elect. His presence with them shall be known, not so much by the comfort that we expect as by *the power* that he executeth. The promise of Christ being with his people in fire and in water has reference to *the power* that he displays for their deliverance. He does not help them, so that they do not feel the heat of fire, but then it shall not kindle upon them; no, not even scorch their skin or singe their hair. They feel the strength of the flood is *above their power* to resist; but it is marvellously held back, for they are not carried away. He who has passed through sorrows, griefs, fires, and floods knows all the weight of every affliction with which his people are visited, and he is able to succour them that are tried, be it circumstantial or spiritual.

I might easily refer you to other instances in God's word, such as David's many and various troubles—"the times that went over him;" Jehoshaphat in danger by

Digitized by Google

joining with Ahab in battle to recover Ramoth Gilead; Hezekiah in distress with Sennacherib's threat of invasion and captivity; Daniel against the jealousies and crafty designs of his fellow-courtiers, but it would take up too much of your time. You have a clue by which you can trace out the truth of the promise for yourself when reading over these portions of God's word. Yet there is one instance of the literal fulfilment of the promise which must not be passed over; it is that of the three Hebrews thrown into the fiery furnace. Here we have two testimonies to the fact of Christ's presence being with them. The King, Darius, knew they were cast in the furnace bound. He expected to see them instantly consumed to ashes; but no, he sees them still living, loose, walking in the midst of the furnace. Mark you, a clear white heat. He could clearly see their form and their visage. He saw a fourth person, the majesty of whose countenance appears to have struck him with the thought that it was like the Son of God. Yes, it was the Son of God; the same who wrestled with Jacob; the same who was with his people in the midst of the sea, and he was with these three faithful men in the fire. He restrained the heat of the fire to them: "The three, when Jesus made the fourth, found fire as soft as air." The other testimony was that when they came out the smell of fire had not passed upon them. Though this is a literal fact, yet how true it is of the spiritual. I doubt not but that some of you can give a testimony sealing the promise true.

But I must draw to a close. In passing through the wilderness of this life to the land of promise, we shall find at times rivers lie between the path before us. These have to be crossed through; bridges are not provided. But, mark you, it is as the river crosses, *the breadth, not its length*. That has never happened to any of God's children yet, nor ever will, The shortest path only is what they have to tread—that is, from one margin on the one side to the other, so that deliverance is near. It may be by terrible things in righteousness the Lord answers our prayers—through the fire or through the flood; but the deliverance is as sure as the promise. He that hath delivered doth deliver and will yet deliver. The Lord delivers his people from all apprehended evil, from natural evils, and from other evils to which they are liable.

Digitized by Google

Bear in mind, tried believers, the promise is for your support; be assured the Lord reigneth. He controls all floods, he restrains the fiercest heat. If the earth itself were to be melted with fervent heat, you will be preserved. Frost shall be fire, and fire shall be frost when he commands the hour. It is God's covenant and oath: "I will be with thee," the rivers shall not overflow thee, the fire shall not burn thee, nor even kindle upon thee. He brings against every element that you fear will be your destruction a greater force than they can ever bring, because his power is almighty, infinite, and divine, and nothing can harm you while Jesus lives. May the Lord give us the assurance of this precious promise, and enable us to take the comfort of it whenever we are called to pass through seasons of trial, sorrow, and distress, and his name shall have all the praise. Amen.

NOTE.—It may be stated that this was the author's first sermon at Hephzibah Chapel, and though it is now eight years since it was preached, the reader is assured that it is, with few exceptions, verbally and substantially the same as was then spoken, ample notes having been taken at the time, and afterwards written out fully. The same remark applies to the five following sermons, which were preached at that period. The reason of their being selected for this volume is on account of the importance of the subjects which they embrace.

---

* The event alluded to in the second paragraph of this sermon was the sudden bereavement of the Author's wife in that chapel, during the singing of the closing hymn, on Lord's day evening, August 13, 1848. The last words she sung were:

"Though in a foreign land,
We are not far from home;
And nearer to our house above
We every moment come."

Digitized by Google

THE SON OF GOD'S REQUEST
AND
GIFT OF HEAVENLY GLORY ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, March 10th, 1861.

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—JOHN XVII. 24.

THE last year of our Lord's life on earth was emphatically the year of his redeemed, the acceptable year of the Lord, the jubilee year of the whole church of God. It was the period which had been looked forward to for ages by the patriarchs and prophets of old. Their faith was in him who was for to come—it rested on the promise couched in the prophetical threatening which the Lord God had made to the great enemy of mankind, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. To us, at this distance of six thousand years, it would appear as if the Light of truth was then feeble and partly obscured, the mere dawning of the day upon the world, then darkened by the sin and sorrow of our first parents, at least, it is commonly so considered; but I confess I do not lean to that opinion; I am inclined to believe that the revelations of grace, mercy, and peace, made to our first parents after their fall, were even clearer and fuller than we ourselves possess with the whole volume of inspired writings; be that as it may, it is beyond all conjecture that the Messiah's incarnation, life, and sacrifice, were made known, declared and believed, expected and looked for by the saints of God in the earliest of the patriarchal times. The record *to us* is obscure, undoubtedly, but that is to be imputed to our present standpoint of observation.

Digitized by Google

We speak of the last year of our Lord's life as eventful, and truly so; but what shall we say of *the last week!* What a crowd of incidents rush upon us! We are lost in astonishment! Never was there written such a biography, never were such scenes witnessed, never were such deeds enacted, never were such words recorded as we find written for our learning in the inspired Word of God. But we get more intensely interested when we begin to reflect upon *the last day* of Christ's life in Jerusalem; I mean the day preceding his crucifixion. What a busy and stirring day was that! There was his triumphal entry from Bethany to Jerusalem, meek and lowly, as he was, seen riding on the colt the foal of an ass. Yet he was the born king, and the acknowledged king, the son of David, in whom was united the person of Christ the Messiah, the Son of God, and hence the ascriptions of praise, "Hosanna in the highest!" His entrance in the temple was marked by the glory which the prophets had declared should be. That temple he called his Father's house; he owned it as such; he revered it as such; and therefore drove out the buyers and sellers as profane persons. Yet anon we see him going forth as a private individual with his disciples to the large upper room made ready for them, that they might keep the passover. This was early in the afternoon, the evening sacrifice being offered at three o'clock. At this paschal feast, in the same room, was then instituted what we emphatically call the Lord's Supper. We need not refer to all the various points of his discourse recorded in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John's gospel; but the various incidents are striking. Here was the treachery of Judas exposed. Here Peter made his boasting Here he received a warning and a revelation of the danger in which he stood. We are also told how they sang a hymn, the "Great Hallel," the 118th Ps. They leave the house, proceed to the temple, they pass through Solomon's Porch, then the "Beautiful Gate," and now they approach the Vine Gate, so called from the large carved vine with golden grapes. Then we have the discourse thereon. Jesus speaks of his disciples' union to him by covenant love, faith in his person and doctrine, and their continuance in him by virtue of his eternal and covenant love to them. He explains more fully to them as to his leaving them, and the object to be accomplished; and parti-

Digitized by Google

cularly does he explain to them the benefits that they would receive by his removal.

We must just notice *the last words* which Jesus spoke to his disciples in their collective capacity, before his crucifixion. He designed that they should understand wherein their source of true peace was to be found—IN HIM. In the world they would be sure to have tribulation, but notwithstanding all that, it would not hurt them. They were to be of good cheer, for he had already overcome the world. "I have overcome the world;" these were the last words of Jesus to them on that memorable occasion.

Our Lord remained still in the inner court of the temple; probably in that called the priest's. Now, Jesus prays *with* them, but more particularly *for* them. It was not an unusual thing for Jews to pray in the temple. The temple was designed to be a house of prayer for all nations. It was the time of prayer, because it was the time of incense being burnt in the temple. In the court of the men, and in that of the women, were to be seen the whole multitude of the people praying without. (Luke i. 10.) Now, the prayer of our Lord with his disciples on this occasion was most remarkable. It is one by itself. It may be called emphatically *the* Lord's Prayer. It was his own aspirations towards heaven; his own heart's desires breathed forth to his Father on behalf of those disciples who were then with him, and who in their persons and presence also represented the whole church of God. At this precise moment Jesus, the Son of God, stood in the temple as THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST, offering to God, his Father, *his intercessory prayer for all his people.* It was the antitypical incense which rose before his Father with divine acceptance, and and which guaranteed and secured the eternity of that life and bliss given to the chosen inheritance, and by virtue of which they dwell for ever in the presence of God and his holy angels. The subject matter of his prayer you will perceive is founded on the divine and eternal union which subsists between them and him as their ever-living and covenant head, and the gift of the Father when he blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he chose them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Digitized by Google

In this prayer of our Lord we have opened unto us, that is, we who are believers in him, the nature of that compact which was entered into between the Father and the Son—the council of peace, or, as we more commonly call it, the covenant of grace. Here we see the conditions on which Jesus grounds his claim, that all his people should be with him eternally in glory. He first claims that he himself shall be glorified: "Glorify thy Son." Why, because he had finished the work which his Father had given him to do, the Mediatorial work of fulfilling the law, of making atonement, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness—the perfection of his prophetical and priestly offices is thus fully declared: Out of this twofold character which our Lord sustains arises the prayer in which he more particularly intercedes for his disciples and all believers who should hereafter be manifested as the children of God by faith in him. This prayer, as I have just said, *is based* on the divine union that has eternally existed between the Father and the Son, and not only so, but *its object* is that each individual member of this family of grace should know it for themselves, realize it in their own experience, and that the proofs of this union shall be so manifested before the world, that he should be known as the gift of the Father for the redemption of a chosen race, and that they were eternally beloved of the Father—loved with the same love as the Father loved the Son.

The prophetical and priestly office which our Lord sustains by virtue of his mediatorial character, and which by his life and work on earth is fully completed, opened up another office which he sustains to the church of God. This is his kingship. His kingly office immediately commenced on the completion of his work *as the servant* of the Father; it constitutes the perfection of his mediatorial character. The Son of God claims, and is invested with, by the Father, kingly power, kingly authority, kingly glory. As the Son of God, the divinely constituted king of the kingdom of God, king of the kingdom of heaven, he, independently of his mediatorial character, claims and demands of God the Father his divine and indisputable right, that all his people, those whom the Father had given him, should participate in all the blessedness which would be comprehended in beholding his primeval glory, and being eternally in his presence.

Digitized by Google

I have been a long while coming to the point of the text, but I felt we could not enter into the majesty and fulness of blessing which these words contain by hastily slipping through the context. I will now read the text again: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

My object in this discourse is to show that the Lord's people are raised to heaven, where Christ sitteth in all his primeval glory, by virtue of his own will and gift, apart from his atoning merits, and apart from his imputed righteousness. That is, the saints in heaven are not there as the mere consequence of Christ's death, or from their renewed nature; they are there by Christ's own authority as the Son of God, being co-equal with his Father—distinct and separate from all the other blessings of redemption. I know I am taking high ground, but you will not find that I shall propound any new doctrine, nor yet present a new view of an old truth, but shall endeavour to draw especial attention to that one great thought which I have put before you, so that it may stand more prominently, and be seen to fuller advantage than we, perhaps, have been accustomed hitherto to look.

In the FIRST place, I shall endeavour to show, *That the covenant of life made with Adam was forfeited by him, and that he, as the head of the human posterity, ruined both its nature, its happiness, and its hopes.*

The Scriptures reveal to us that the first man, Adam, was created in the image of God; a being pure in his understanding, affections, dispositions, and emotions, capable of serving, pleasing, and delighting in God while he thus stood; God having breathed into him the breath of life, he became a living soul—mark, this soul is immaterial as to its substance; it was holy and pure as to its essence, and is immortal as to its existence, its consciousness, and its individuality, either in union with the body or without it, constituting its personality and identity. The Scriptures farther reveal to us that the man Adam was placed where there was everything good to look at, everything good to eat; everything that was right and proper for his condition. In this place, the garden of Eden, there stood two trees—the tree of life and the tree of knowledge. The divine law was: "Of every tree of the gar-

Digitized by Google

den thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat." Now, this law was written in the heart of Adam. His reason, conscience, and will were so far enlightened by the law, that by nature his love would prompt his obedience. We learn, also, that beside the prohibition as to the tree of knowledge, there was a penalty declared on its disobedience, "for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We know the sequel. Adam, by his own free will, did disobey the divine command. He became a transgressor, the covenant of life was broken. A moral death, commonly called spiritual, immediately ensued. His circumstances and condition were reversed, his position in the garden of Eden, where was the tree of life, was forfeited, and he was driven out, no longer to partake thereof, and ultimately his body became subject to corporeal death. His disobedience shut him out of God's favour. It rendered him what he was not before. It rendered him what he never could be again—perfect and pure in himself, and, instead of being pure and innocent, he became a sinner. All his moral perfections, involving his understanding, conscience, and will, became depraved. He was now unlike his Creator, and consequently there was an inevitable separation of man from God, of spirit with spirit, of intercourse, and of fellowship. As a creature, therefore, now a sinner by his own actual transgression, he is for ever debarred from regaining the original state of innocency, happiness, and favour in which he at first stood. Some persons have unwisely reasoned upon the fall of Adam and its attendant evils, and have impiously demanded, Could not God have prevented all this? To this we can only reply, that the perfection of divine wisdom, goodness, and justice dwell in God alone: the immutability of his nature is peculiar to himself. Infallibility is God's grand prerogative alone. Mutability necessarily belongs to every person and every thing that is *created*. "Behold, his angels he charged with folly; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight." Let sinful imaginations be, therefore, suppressed and silenced.

The Scriptures again enlighten us as to the universality of man's depravity: "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God. They are all gone aside. They are altogether become filthy. There

Digitized by Google

is none that doeth good; no, not one." (Ps. xiv. 2, 3.) "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 2, 3.) This is the testimony to the universal depravity of mankind. Man is depraved, not by the growth of habit, or want of culture, but by nature; the stock-root was depraved, and has infected us all. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.)

But now let us come nearer home. How stands Scripture truth with regard to ourselves? If we have in any degree been enlightened by the Spirit of truth, we shall be enabled, perhaps, to say something from our own observation and experience that will correspond with God's word. In the first place, did we not discover that being made light in the Lord, once we were darkness? Not only so, but that we were dead in trespasses and in sins? That we were under the dominion and power of Satan, our will inclined to evil, and that in every stage of life sin discovered itself to be the ruling power over us? Do we not remember what ignorance and darkness overspread our minds? Our understandings were incapable of knowing divine truth. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Thus it was with us whilst in nature's grave. The ruin of our happiness is well described by the psalmist: "Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. iii. 16–18.) The apostle, in another place (Eph. ii. 12), also very strikingly expresses our condition by nature: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Can any statement more truly depict the ruin of our nature by sin, the ruin of all our happiness in this life, and the groundlessness of all our hopes of ever being able to acquire the favour of God? Merit being altogether out of the question, we are reduced to an absolute impossibility of ever hoping, by nature, to be in a condition of improvement, or of any expectation to be derived from the fact of the mere misery to which we are reduced as would excite the pity and compassion of

Digitized by Google

the Creator to recover us. The divine decree is absolute: "The soul that sinneth shall die." The covenant of life was—Do this and live. The covenant was broken, and death immediately followed. Death has passed upon all men: "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." All men by nature are dead to God, dead in sin. This death appertains to all those powers of the soul and spirit that we term moral or spiritual; that which originally was the likeness of the image of God. It is not an annihilation of the soul, but is a depravity of its nature, intellectual and moral, affecting the judgment, conscience, and will. In other words, the heart is depraved and the mind darkened. This death is also the separation of the soul from the presence of God as to his favour and enjoyment, but not his government as the Creator. You will thus be prepared to admit that if there were any possibility of man's salvation, it must be by a scheme arising out of some circumstances or by some plan wholly apart and distinct from his condition of ruin and degradation. As I have just said, it was not our misery that excited the compassion of God; for if it were, his justice might be impugned with some degree of plausibility; but God has put it totally out of the power of men or devils to find fault with the method of salvation which he has set forth in the gospel of his grace. His righteousness is therein declared, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. We are now prepared to proceed to the second step, by which we hope to reach at the great subject couched in our text.

Consider, in the SECOND place, *That the Covenant of life being broken, God has provided a better Covenant—a Covenant of Grace.*

We are accustomed to speak of God's mercy, the grace of God, and I glory in the thought there is such a thing as the mercy of God, the grace of God. But, my friends, let us endeavour to have right thoughts about these great matters. In the Scriptures of truth there is undoubtedly revealed the mercy of God to fallen man, there is forgiveness with God that he may be feared; thus there is hope for the wretched, mercy for the miserable, and salvation for the lost. God in his infinite mercy has provided a scheme of salvation; it originated in his pure, free, and

Digitized by Google

sovereign rich grace alone; it is founded in his own everlasting love towards those whom he sovereignly elected to be heirs of salvation. This is where all salvation begins, the sovereign love of God; this sovereign love of God is not that arbitrary, capricious thing which carnal reasoners assert, but is founded in infinite goodness, wisdom, and truth—just and right is he. David speaks of an everlasting covenant made with him, this was a covenant of grace; it could not possibly be any other—a covenant ordered in all things and sure. The covenant of grace is a covenant made between God the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit; it originated in the love of God the Father, it was undertaken by God the Son, and is applied to the persons of the redeemed by God the Spirit. Before all time was this covenant formed and entered into by the glorious Trinity; Jehovah the Father of his sovereign will and good pleasure chose the persons to be saved, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and gave him to be their Covenant head; the Lord Jesus undertook their redemption by rendering a perfect obedience to God's law, which by imputation was to be to all and is upon all who believe in him for righteousness. But stay! more was wanted. God's law had been dishonoured. How was it to be made honourable? How was Justice to be satisfied? A penalty was threatened, a penalty was incurred, and the penalty must be paid. How can it be done? By the shedding of blood. Who could make an atonement? Not all the angels in heaven, not all the race of man, the Son of God could alone make such an atonement as would be accepted by Divine Justice; it was done, it was accepted, it was a substitutionary work on behalf of the chosen whom God had loved before the foundation of the world; Divine Law was thus magnified, the believer was saved, and God was glorified. How sweet when this truth is applied to the soul, and we can say with the poet,

"My sins were his, upon him laid,
He all their weight sustained;
My debt how vast, which yet he paid,
And my deliverance gained."

We have seen thus far the way made clear for the believer being brought nigh to God. There was also a provision in this covenant for a renewal of his nature; he that was before dead in trespasses and in sins is now

Digitized by Google

made by the eternal Spirit alive again, quickened by him, and by him this life is carried on; the believer now lives unto God, walks in his ways, being found in the way of truth and righteousness. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold, all things have become new:" so far, then, the man's standing in Christ is manifested before men. As it regards his standing in Christ before God, it is owing to his being clothed in the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus, a complete atonement having been made for all his sins by the death of Christ, and who has risen again for his justification; and since by the operation of the Holy Ghost upon his heart in regeneration he has become a sanctified man, he is now qualified for the enjoyment of God's presence; being made a partaker of the divine nature, and brought nigh to God, he can have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ; he is made meet for the heavenly inheritance.

Yet it is not the possession of these blessings that gives the believer his title to be where Christ is, and to behold the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. As a creature he is simply placed where he was before, though of course, in some respects superior, but I mean, as a creature upon this earth renewed in the spirit of his mind, whatever he has derived by the substitutionary work of Christ, in itself considered, it gives him no authority to claim heaven as his portion. He is indeed truly blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ by the gift of the Father, but all this arises simply from its being according as the Father hath chosen his person in Christ, and made his person standing in him perfectly secure. Our title to heaven as our eternal inheritance is over and above and beyond all the blessings that arise out of the soul's redemption from sin, death, and hell; it is a distinct gift in itself, arising out of the love of God in Christ, and based on Christ's own authority, by his own will and pleasure. By virtue of his equality with the Father, the Son of God claims with authority that those whom the Father had given him should be (now that his mediatorial work was accomplished) with him to behold that glory which he had before the world was—the primeval glory which he possessed before sin lighted upon this earth, or entered the heart of Satan in heaven.

Digitized by Google

If Christ had not by his own will given us heaven, how could we get there? Would a sanctified nature necessarily procure it for us? By no means. We are fitted for the enjoyment of heaven by a sanctified nature, it is true, but it gives us no title; our being made meet for the heavenly inheritance arises out of the great and glorious fact that our title for heaven is over and above and beyond what has been done *in* us. But further, all the people of God are accepted in Christ, are viewed as clothed in his perfect righteousness, and which is an everlasting righteousness, which is unto all and upon all who truly believe in him. But does even this procure our title to heavenly bliss? No; we should have lived on this earth for ever and ever, and never one moment higher. We might have had communion with God, as Adam did before he sinned, but, being a creature fitted only for the enjoyment and happiness which this earth was designed to impart, he could rise no higher. Sin, however, coming in spoilt all, and God has defeated Satan by destroying his works, in sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Now, though all this has been done for the salvation of God's elect, and they are brought into the blessedness of knowing that they are saved from the curse of God's wrath against sin, and have the hope of eternal blessedness, yet it is not the present participation of spiritual blessings on which we rest our assurance of being with Christ and for ever beholding his glory. It is *the earnest* of our future inheritance, I grant, but it is not the title itself. You see, I repeat the same thing as to the *participation* of spiritual blessings, as was just said, as to the actual *possession* of them: the distinction is obvious, participation has reference to one's experience or enjoyment; possession, as to the fact itself, whether we are assured of it or not.

But again. God's eternal and everlasting love to man might have exerted and made known to him, and he made to feel his love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and still there would be no title or merit thereby. Friendship gives no title to possession, no not even a bare promise; there must be a properly constituted title from the owner in order to make over to another property available for his use and enjoyment; without it, there can be no authority for claiming possession. It is not, therefore, the indubitable proofs that we may have of the love,

Digitized by Google

favour, and friendship of God in our souls that gives us a title to the heavenly inheritance, though they are certainly blessed *indications* that heaven is our home, and that we are being brought on our way thither. Our title is over and above and beyond the exercise of God's loving-kindnesses of which we may have the experience.

Thus I have endeavoured, in various ways, to cut away the ground from under any who may be resting their title to the heavenly state merely upon that which is done for the church of God by virtue of the mediatorial work of Christ, or what has been known and felt in the heart experimentally by the Spirit's gracious operations. My design has been all along to lead you to see that the gift of eternal glory to the saints arises out of, and is based upon, the gracious compact provided for in the covenant of grace, irrespective of those transactions which were undertaken as the result of that covenant. If I have succeeded in making my point clear to you, it will enable you to place the crown upon *the person* of the Son of God instead of upon *his mediatorial work*. Let us now attempt briefly to—

III. *Consider the reason and ground of the request which our Lord made to his Father that his people should be with him where he was.*

The reason and ground of the request is clearly stated in the text, and may be easily understood. The *reason* is, that they may behold the glory of the Son of God. The *ground* is, that the Son of God was loved of the Father before the foundation of the world. In speaking a few thoughts upon these two points, I hope I shall be preserved from darkening counsel by words without knowledge. We will first look at what I call the *ground* of the request. This is the Father's eternal love. God is love. Essentially so and eternally the same by reason of his own self-existence and immutableness. He can be no other than what he is in himself, *love*. In the unity of the Godhead we have revealed to us a Trinity of Persons,—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; consequently, as the Godhead is eternal, the Persons are eternal, and the relationships are also eternal; hence the union is also eternal as well as divine. The Father loved the Son eternally; he is the Son of God in truth and love. The union between the Father and the Son is thus stated:—"As thou, Father, art in me and I in thee." The union

Digitized by Google

is therefore perfect, complete, and indissoluble, founded in love, and that love being the nature of the Godhead itself.

We have referred to the covenant of grace between the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. The *immediate* purpose of that covenant was the salvation of the church of God; *the ultimate purpose was their glorification.* We have stated that it originated in the love of God the Father; that the Son of God undertook the work of redemption by becoming the Mediator between God and man, and by taking the sinner's place. To accomplish the salvation of the church the Son of God, though coequal with his Father in nature, power, and glory, must become the servant of the Father in order to fulfil his will and the work he had undertaken. To save his church the Father gave his Son, that they might live through him, and also gave him to be the Head over his body the church; and by virtue of the Father's union to the Son and the union of the church to the Son there is a complete oneness with the Father—"a mutual inbeing in each other." Now, on this foundation—this divine and eternal union between Christ and his church and also to his Father—the Son of God founds his claim and right. The Mediatorial work, so far as suretyship and substitution are concerned, is now fulfilled. Founded on right, a perfect union and a perfect equality, the Son of God, therefore, claims and demands that the *ultimate* purpose for which he undertook the Mediatorship should be henceforth consummated—the glorification of the whole election of grace—"TO BRING MANY SOULS UNTO GLORY." The perfection of "the Captain of their salvation" was constituted by the sufferings he undertook in their stead and for their sake; and now he is himself, as their Mediator, to be crowned with glory and honour; honour and majesty is to be laid upon him as the God-man Christ Jesus. As the Son of God he now claims with delight the recompense, reward, and fruit of all his degradation and pains—*the eternal salvation and glorification of all his people.* He in himself is the head, root, and foundation of the entire election of grace. He has finished the work which his Father gave him to do. He is now no more in the world, and he comes to his Father. What for? To claim and request that part of the divine compact which was the Son's right to demand. "Father, I will that

Digitized by Google

they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." By no means are we to understand that this claim is made and demanded, as though there was an unyielding on the part of the Father; but the divine authority and title by which the church of God is glorified is here seen with greater beauty in the fact that every redeemed child of fallen Adam is raised to heavenly places by reason of a divine and holy compact with the Eternal Three, originating in the love of God and Father, and which he is as willing to concede to his Son as the Son is prompt to assert his own right on behalf of his body the church. So far, then, we consider the request is based on the love of God and the mutual union subsisting betwixt Christ and his Father.

We have now to glance at *the reason* why Christ makes the request. It is "that they may behold my glory." This glory is that which he possessed with the Father before he laid it aside in order to become the Mediator. This primeval glory, the original native glory which the Son of God had co-essentially and coeval with the Father, is that to which the church has hitherto been necessarily strangers; but the request is that they may behold it, hitherto unknown to the human race. But now that salvation is accomplished, the wonders of redeeming love are to be unfolded to the church's view in the person of the Saviour. His glorious person is then to be more fully revealed. Now we see through a glass darkly—then, face to face. He by his own will, in union with the Father, claims and demands with authority that his people shall be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory—the glory which he had before the world was. What we know *now* is very imperfect; what we shall know *then* will increasingly astonish us. Ages upon ages throughout eternity will be occupied in beholding the inexhaustible glory and fulness of the Son of God. This will constitute the eternal happiness of the redeemed family of heaven—beholding the glories of the Lamb amidst his Father's throne. There is also a glory which Jesus possesses by the gift of the Father—that which he possesses as the God-man: this he also claims, Glorify thou me, me in my human nature, which I assumed and in which my mediatorial and substitutionary work was accomplished: this seems to be the uttermost of Christ's will and pleasure concerning us. He discovers and un-

Digitized by Google

folds his boundless love to us, that we, who are loved by the Father, chosen in Christ, should be where he is, to behold his glory. Eternal union with Christ is to be the basis of everlasting communion with God. Believers will be eternally and completely happy in beholding the glory of Christ, crowned with glory and honour. He will be eternally glorified and admired in all his saints. The root of all which is to be traced to the eternal and everlasting love of God.

I will now conclude with a few general and practical observations.

Obs. 1. *We see the perfect equality of the Lord Jesus Christ with his Father.* Here is couched in the Saviour's demand that his people shall be with him to behold his glory—his Godhead, his Sonship, his Mediatorial power, his authority, and his universal dominion. These are alike eternal, being constituted by the nature of his Person as the Second Person in the divine and glorious Trinity. This gives us a most exalted view of his Person. His Godhead, Sonship, power, and glory, being alike eternal and coeval with the Father. The language of the text implies all that. See here on what the faith of God's elect is fed and nourished: To live by faith on the Son of God is to have a believing view of what he is in his own Person. How could faith trust the salvation of the soul nakedly and unreservedly but in such a Saviour as the Son of God is—one who is God, and who, though the Mediator between God and the church, claims equality with God? Here is the rock of our salvation: He that believeth on the Son of God hath life, and shall never be ashamed.

Obs. 2. *See the glorious nature of Christ's work—his priesthood and his intercession.* The glory of his Person gives a glory to his work. Every character he sustains with a dignity that adds a refulgence to every action that he performed. His priesthood is eternal. He is the great High Priest—a perfect one, without sin. His sacrifice was perfect, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. The immaculateness of his Person as the God-man was the fragrant incense which God accepted. His complete atonement made an end of sin, and his perfect obedience brought in an everlasting righteousness. The High Priest, his offering and the incense, have become a propitiation between God and the sinner. Every sinner

Digitized by Google

coming to the mercy seat, pleading the name, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ as the ground of his hope for pardon and full and free redemption, presents merits which cannot possibly be rejected. God cannot deny himself; he gave his Son that we might live through him.

"No sinner shall ever be empty sent back
Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus' sake."

Obs. 3. *The glorious destiny of the people of God.* It is to be where Christ sitteth, to be for ever with the Lord, to behold his glory—the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. What glorious hopes are raised for each believer to indulge in! Have any of you such exalted hopes? I do humbly hope, from the fact of my mind being led to this subject to-night, that there are some souls who can find food, rich food, on such sublime truths as I have attempted to declare. When our souls are brought home to glory, re-united to that body which is to be made incorruptible, oh, with what joy we shall sing the song of redeeming love! Songs of everlasting joy upon our heads; all tears wiped away; sorrow and sighing for ever fled away. But, oh, that blessed thought! no sin to mar our peace, nothing to interrupt our joy, nothing to tempt our eyes from off the dear Redeemer, no doubt to cross our minds, but sweet, blessed assurance, Christ is mine, glory is mine, for ever and ever.

"For ever to behold him shine,
For evermore to call him mine,
And see him still before me;
For ever on his face to gaze,
And meet his full assembled rays,
While all the Father he displays
To all the saints in glory."

Obs. 4. *The Lord's people are now in a better position than before they fell in Adam.* By the covenant of grace a union is constituted between Christ and his Church with his Father which is unconditional and immutable. Beside, in the first covenant there was no relationship, no adoption, no law of love; the mutableness of a conditional covenant was soon apparent, and the ruin of the whole race of mankind was complete. Here in this covenant of grace glory is so linked that nothing in time or nature can sever it, Christ having executed his Father's will as the Mediator of the covenant, authoritatively demands that all his

Digitized by Google

people, every one, the weakest, the feeblest lamb in his flock, shall be with him to participate in that glory which he had with his Father before the foundation of the world. So that with the poet we may say,

"He raised me from the depths of sin,
The gates of gaping hell;
And fixed my standing more secure
Than 'twas before I fell."

Obs. 5. *The foundation of the believer's hopes.* It is God's everlasting love. This is the origin of all the blessings that the church of God can ever hope or expect. Never let us forget, "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.) The gift is through him, that is, his own gift, by his own authority, and not simply for his sake. Let every one see and examine upon what his hope is founded, upon what he expects; can you say in the words of that choice hymn,

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name;
On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

We are living too low, if we are living below this mark; we have not sufficiently high thoughts of Christ, they are all too poor. Christ wills and demands eternal life and everlasting salvation and glory for all his elect people. Survey this sweet truth, ask the Spirit of truth to lead you into it. Here you will find the joy of your salvation; it involves more than at first appears. You will see the spring from whence all your hopes of happiness flow; and this will not only raise your hopes, but it will increase your joy, strengthen your faith, warm your love, and you will, like the eunuch, the more you know and understand of Christ's love, the more you will go on your way rejoicing.

Strangers to Christ! strangers to truth! What think you of these things? Perhaps you think it is all unintelligible jargon. But what think you of this simple truth: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." If you have any concern for your immortal soul, I say, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, he will have mercy upon him, and he will abundantly pardon." Amen.

Digitized by Google

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST,

AND THE

GLORY THAT FOLLOWED.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, March 31st, 1861. (Easter Sunday.)

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—LUKE XXIV. 26.

THE two great leading subjects of Christian doctrine are—the sufferings of Christ and his glory; his mediatorial work, and his kingly dignity and honour. This, too, is the order in which the church of Christ is placed—first, temporary sufferings; second, eternal glory.

The worldling has reversed the order of this—good things now, evil things some other time. The reason of this is, sin has turned the world upside down; and this is how it is that we account for the marked difference between the world and the church. They are at opposite points; their aims are at the antipodes of each other. The masters whom they serve are as distinct, and as easily distinguished, as the light is from the darkness; and the service which their servants render characterises them either as the servants of God, or as the servants of sin.

But Christ, as said the woman of Samaria, came to restore all things; and so thought the two disciples as they were journeying to Emmaus. This thought, however, was but a dim view of the truth. They showed to this, apparently, an inquisitive stranger, what imperfect, low views they entertained of Christ's work; what carnal notions of his object in coming to this earth, and also of the work which he was to accomplish. They thought some great change, some mysterious alteration, was to take place in their national position and circumstances. They thought that the Christ was to come a conqueror at the first starting. So thought the Jews, generally; and

Digitized by Google

so thought the Herod who sought to slay the born king of the Jews in his infancy, for he thought that his own throne would be endangered thereby.

Two things in the Person of Jesus, doubtless, must have occasioned a mysteriousness, and a degree of perplexity, in the minds of these two disciples, and, indeed, it confounded them. These were his occasional rays of divinity that he shot through both his words and his actions, and his perpetual suffering throughout his public life. They had not forgotten what they had seen and heard; but having no distinct views of either the prophecies concerning him, nor of the spiritual nature of his kingdom, they failed to perceive the wonderful constitution of his Person, and when he was removed from them by violent hands, they could not account for it, but merely express their disappointment by stating, "but we trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel." Yet these men were unlike the Jews in general. The Jews went about their usual avocations as though nothing had happened; but these two men were very sad, uneasy, restless. They were for leaving the rest of their companions, and on a short journey they proceed; but our Lord Jesus Christ has his heart set upon them, and is bent secretly on bringing them back. Pity it is, when Christians are for a time disappointed in their expectations, that they should separate from each other, and thereby weaken every part. What a mercy it is that Christ does not permit us to forsake him quite, though we may attempt to forsake the assembling of ourselves together! He knows our ramblings; he knows the best methods of making us more acquainted with himself.

Christ made himself known to these two disciples, and as their object in going to Emmaus was for no particular object, they came back sooner than they intended. Their hearts were warmed with his love, and back they hasted to the other disciples, to tell what a blessed time of communion they had had with their dear Lord, and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread. What a commentary on the prophecies, and on the Psalms! One could fain wish their memories had been inspired, and that they had written this commentary of commentaries. Matthew Henry, Dr. Gill, and Dr. Barnes, might have spared their labour.

These two disciples did, however, treasure up the sub-

Digitized by Google

stance of what Christ had taught them. He opened up their understandings. Their hearts burned, their hearts were warmed, their affections were all alive. They were enthusiastic when they told the others how that Christ had made himself known, and yet suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. When their understandings were opened, then they understood how it was that Jesus made himself of no reputation. They then understood why he took upon him the form of a servant, and why he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and how it was that being found in the fashion of a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. They then understood why it was that God had therefore highly exalted him, and had given him a name above every name, and that there was no other name under heaven by which men could be saved—the man Christ Jesus.

Such, indeed, is the tenor of the prophecies concerning Christ. The cross and the crown will be found in reading Isa. liii., Dan. ix., Zech. xii. 10, Ps. xxii., lxix.–lxxxviii., &c. So, indeed, is the doctrine of the apostles Paul, Peter, and others. They learned at the same school, of the same master, and hence their doctrine is the same. See what Peter has said upon it: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophecied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." (1 Pet. i. 10, 11.)

What an unparalleled teacher was the Lord Jesus Christ! How he reasoned with these two disciples! How he showed the fitness of things!—the necessity for Christ's death; the necessity for his state of poverty; the necessity of understanding the work which the salvation of his church involved! What a body of divinity is comprehended in the words of our text: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" We will endeavour to consider more particularly the words before us:

I. The sufferings of Christ.
II. Why he suffered them.
III. His exaltation.

I. *The sufferings of Christ.*—The history of Jesus

Digitized by Google

Christ's earthly life is one of the most wonderful, mysterious productions that was ever presented to the world. The more we contemplate it, bearing in mind his heavenly origin, the more we are amazed at the sufferings he endured. When we consider the purity of his life, his unparalleled poverty, and the implacability of his enemies, we are astonished beyond measure. The sufferings of Christ may be seen in three points of view—corporeal, mental, and judicial. Corporeal, those which affected his bodily state; mental, those pertaining to the mind and heart; judicial, such as were endured from God his Father in respect of the more immediate pain and sorrow as the result of his taking the sinner's place.

1. *Corporeal.* First, we see his sufferings were bodily, in the fact that he was without a home of his own. When the lawyer, who evidently had been much struck with our Lord's teaching and clear expositions of Moses and the prophets said, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest;" the reply was, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Again, his poverty of circumstances was such, he was dependent on the bounty of others for his daily support: though his wants were supplied by the women who followed him, yet at times, he hungered. Of his poverty we often read, but of his being able from his own personal resources, as a man, to supply his own daily necessities we nowhere read. The fact is significant, for doubtless it is from his experience of human poverty on earth, we, by his perfect sympathy for us, are made rich in grace to bear it for ourselves.

(2.) The sufferings of his *social* life were unquestionably keen and cutting. He had not the sympathies of his own family, he was often reproached by them, and *his friends*, on one occasion, sent for to take him, for they said he was beside himself. What home or family enjoyment could our Lord ever possess with such persons, who considered him an object only for safe custody? As he had no honour in his own country, it is evident there could be neither profit nor pleasure in doing good where his ministry was exercised; and it is added he could do no mighty work there because of their unbelief. Indeed, in Capernaum itself, his life was at one time imminently in danger, "but he *escaped* out of their hands."

(3.) In his *public* life what sufferings must he have en-

Digitized by Google

dured from the constant opposition of the Jews! The Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, lawyers, all conspired to provoke him, lying in wait to catch him in his words, to entangle him, so that they might have some occasion to accuse him, to injure his reputation, and to prevent his usefulness. By the treachery of a false disciple, he was betrayed into violent hands, underwent a mock trial, rudely insulted and abused to an insufferable extent, unrighteously convicted upon a false charge, and through popular clamour, urged by the unbelieving Jews, his body was shamefully subject to the cruelest treatment it could receive from human hands—the execrable death of the cross.

2. We see the sufferings of our Lord were also *mental*. From the fact that his soul, as well as his body, was pure and sinless, we conclude that his sufferings were more severe and intense than we, who are fallen creatures, can imagine. We know what it is to suffer reproach wrongfully. Now, Jesus was reproached continually. In one of the Psalms he said, "Reproach hath broken my heart." What unparalleled sufferings must they have been which he endured in the wilderness, from the temptations of Satan; tempted to doubt his own Sonship; to tempt God's providence; to tempt God's care and safety of his person; tempted to pride and false honour. Now, his sufferings from these temptations are beyond our imagination; we, by reason of sin, have an element within us upon which the tempter can work, and to his temptations our depraved nature is inclined, and therefore there is a degree of obtuseness which renders us incapable of *feeling* how great is the evil of those temptations by which he was assailed. This the Saviour did feel, and thus his acquaintance with temptations in all points rendered him perfect and faithful as our high priest, being thereby capable of succouring those who are tempted.

To enter minutely into the mental sufferings of our Lord would be to enter upon an inexhaustible subject; we read of his fears, of his offering up supplications with strong crying and tears, and was heard in that which he feared. What details of his agonies of soul we find depicted and spoken of in the 22nd and 69th Psalms, and also the 53rd of Isaiah. We read of his being troubled in spirit, of being grieved for the hardness of heart which he witnessed, of the tears he shed, of the lamentations he

Digitized by Google

uttered, of the threatenings he denounced, his anger and his rebukes—all which bespeak an amount of suffering which his holy soul endured, of which we have but little conception. We venture to approach the margin of this great ocean, to embark upon it we are unable; our wisdom will be to be silent, whilst we stand on the shore and wonder.

3. There is, however, in our next point, the *judicial* sufferings of our Lord, more revealed. Here our contemplations are assisted, and it is intended that thereby we shall find food for our souls. The judicial snfferings of our Lord I have explained, as referring to what the Son of God endured in respect of his mediatorial character and work which he undertook. His mediatorial life on earth was wholly on behalf of the church of God, it was not for himself. His perfect sinlessness throughout his life, rendered him capable of working out and bringing in an everlasting righteousness; this is the more apparent when we consider what contradictions he endured from sinners against himself—his authority in teaching was often questioned; his miracles were blasphemed and his testimony was disbelieved and rejected; he came unto his own, but his own received him not. He challenged his opposers to convince him of sin; he could be accused of no wrong action, of no bad spirit, no hate, no bad motive, no offensive speaking, no moral law broken, but, in fact, zealous of the law and of the temple worship; looking, then, at all the facts connected with the mediatorial life, in which Jesus personally suffered, we see it was the result of the divine appointment; there was a necessity for these sufferings, as we hope shortly to show. These sufferings were, what I call, judicial, not simply from the circumstances in which he was placed, but by virtue of that everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; every pain, sorrow, and grief were, by a divine necessity, a part of that covenant which it was his part to fulfil, and was undertaken on behalf of those whose interests he represented. This is finely expressed by one of our poets:

> "In all that Jesus did on earth
> His church an interest have;
> Go trace him from his humble birth,
> Down to the silent grave."

That the sufferings of our Lord in his mediatorial work were peculiar and most intense will be seen by looking at that Scripture, John xii. 27: "The Greeks who

Digitized by Google

came to Jerusalem desired to see Jesus." Observe the answer that followed: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour." Again, when speaking of Judas being a traitor (John xiii. 21): "When Jesus had thus said, *he was troubled in spirit*, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, one of you shall betray me." The great work of pouring out his soul to death being in immediate prospect, though in full health and vigour of body, yet at the same time knowing all things that should come upon him, and that his betrayal into the hands of sinful men was a part of the instrumentality which God had designed by which the great work of salvation was to be accomplished. Again our poet Kent shall help us:—

> "Great was the mystery, truly great,
> That hell's designs should hell defeat;
> But here eternal wisdom shined,
> For Satan wrought what God designed."

Follow now the Saviour into the garden of Gethsemane. There we see his soul in agony, sorrowful, shrinking from the cup his Father gave him to drink—his earnest prayer. Here we see the Father has left him to his own human weakness. And on the cross he asks why his Father had forsaken him? What a piercing cry must that have been which shook the very heavens, rent the earth, and shot like flaming thunderbolts through every part of hell's dark domain! Devils were baffled and confounded, for at that moment of his weakness, Satan, the enemy of God and man, the prince and power of the air, was dethroned, and his works for ever destroyed. The keys of death, hell, and the grave were wrested from his infernal grasp, and given in possession to him whose right it is—the Captain of our salvation. Redemption's price is fully paid, it is eternally complete, and the church of God is eternally saved by a power which declares him to be the Son of God.

II. We come now to consider, *why Jesus suffered these things*. We read in the first part of the service the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. How blessedly it speaks of Christ's substitutionary work, and of those sufferings he endured, to accomplish the salvation of his elect people! That chapter has been called the tree of life, and truly it is so to the believer in Jesus; indeed, to him it is a spiritual

Digitized by Google

Gethsemane, a spiritual Mount Calvary. He looks at the sufferings and the death of Christ with other eyes than the mock professor and the ordinary bystanders. Here he beholds Christ crucified most evidently set forth. Here he perceives the greatest subject contained in all the word of God. Here he sees Christ in his person and offices, in his love and grace, most gloriously revealed. We see, when under the teachings of the divine Spirit, the undertaking of the Redeemer on behalf of his people; he, as their surety, is set forth in his sufferings, sorrows, and death, and then we have his triumphant victory and conquests over all his enemies as the fruit and effect of his wonderful death. The sixth verse speaks of Christ as the substitute of his people. Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. In the covenant of grace Jesus became their surety, and in taking their low place, he became responsible; he took, by imputation, their sinnership. Christ was treated as the sinner in the court of divine justice. He became incarnate, for the purpose of being treated as a sinner in his people's stead, and, though he was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, yet he suffered for sin, being, by imputation and substitution, *guilty*. And as there can be no suffering where there is no sin, so Christ being considered guilty was oppressed, afflicted, and opened not his mouth. He had nothing to urge against it, he made no complaint of the position he took in behalf of his people. He took the entire weight of all the sins of his people, he was oppressed with it, he felt it; he was afflicted, he suffered pain, anguish, guilt; his oppression and affliction consisted in the immeasurable amount of sin resting on him.

It is also said, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." Here his perfect innocency is set forth by the figure of a lamb, also to set forth a *sacrifice* for sin. A sacrifice for sin is constituted by the innocent suffering for the guilty. The sinner suffering for his own sin is not a sacrifice, but simply paying the just penalty for his own crime. Christ is brought as a lamb into the court of divine law, and is laid on the altar of Infinite Justice. He has *given himself* willingly, without resistance, without a murmuring word, to be a sacrifice for sin, "*so* he opened not his mouth," for, like a guilty man, he had nothing to say. But while he gave himself to be a sacrifice for sin, there was an infinite merit and worth in his sacrifice as

Digitized by Google

such. It was the person of the Son of God who suffered, and hence he became thereby a PROPITIATION for sin. Mere human nature, however innocent and sinless in itself, would have been no propitiation. If it could have been so, verily, the Father would have spared his own Son. But it is clearly evident that the reason why Jesus the Son of God suffered, the just for the unjust, was because there was no other way by which sinners could be saved; therefore there was *an absolute necessity* for his death, seeing that God the Father, in his infinite and eternal love, had purposed the salvation of his elect. It was not the mere fact of the innocent suffering for the guilty that constituted the Atonement, nor was it the mere fact of an imputed righteousness being reckoned to the believer's account that could obtain for him an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified. The foundation of an all-sufficient Atonement, and the real value of an imputed righteousness, is constituted by the personal merit alone of HIM whose substitutionary death should *in itself* become an atonement, and whose personal obedience to divine law *could* be imputed as an everlasting righteousness to all to whom the Lord should impute no iniquity, and whose transgressions should be forgiven. Now, in all God's created universe could no such person be found. "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." In another place it is recorded, "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Again: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." These passages of God's word are glimpses of those eternal transactions between the eternal Three-One Jehovah in covenant. Here it is, we see, that the Son of God was the only person who could undertake the work of men's salvation. Here also we see not only his fitness and ability for accomplishing his Father's will, but we see also his willingness. His personal ability, his voluntary willingness to undertake the work of redemption, gives a meritorious worth to all he did; his sacrifice was a sacri-

Digitized by Google

fice well-pleasing unto God. The Lord is well-pleased for his righteousness' sake, for he magnified the law and made it honourable. So great and glorious a personage as the Son of God fulfilling his Father's will and pleasure made the work of salvation glorious in all its parts, from the moment of its being undertaken in covenant until it was fully accomplished by the death on the cross. Thus we see, from the incompetency and the absence of any created being who could come forward in behalf of the fallen race of man, there was but one resource—the Son of God, in union with the Father and the Spirit, at once appears and undertakes the work of salvation—because none but the Son of God could accomplish so stupendous and glorious a work; and as this work involved his incarnation on earth, there was therefore an absolute necessity for his suffering.

Again: The reason why he should suffer appears from the covenant engagements made with the Father. The council of peace was between them both. For this purpose Christ undertook to become incarnate, and in the fulness of time he was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem those who were under the law. In that nature which he took he fulfilled the law that had been broken. The fulfilling of that law by so honourable and divine a personage as the Son of God, was the bringing in of an everlasting righteousness, which is unto all and is upon all them that believe. Adam, as the head of the human race, by his transgression, brought all his posterity into ruin and degradation—lower than the beasts that perish. But Christ coming has restored the ruin in which the church of God was involved, and its hopes of happiness are placed on a better foundation; not on creature innocence, nor yet on a renewed nature, for no creature righteousness, however constituted, could avail before God. Christ alone, being the Son of God, wrought out a righteousness which is available before God by its being imputed without the works of the believer.

There was, therefore, a necessity that Christ should suffer, because he became a surety for his people. This involved a substitution. What he suffered was on their account. In themselves they were helpless, utterly incompetent; they must have perished if Christ had not undertaken their cause. There was also a necessity that

Digitized by Google

Jesus should obey the law. The law of God required to be vindicated and honoured; it had been dishonoured and would have remained so had not Jesus fulfilled it. But then his fulfilling the law for himself could not thereby prevent the penalty of a broken law falling upon them who had broken it. It behoved Jesus, who had undertaken the work of redemption, to do both—fulfil the law and pay its penalty too, and both on behalf of the redeemed. Here we see the necessity for that wonderful constitution of his person in the union of his two natures, the Godhead and manhood, which so eminently appears in him as the Redeemer. By his complete obedience the law was perfectly fulfilled, and by his death a complete satisfaction was made for sin in the penalty being fully paid. Justice can ask for nothing more at the sinner's hands, nor yet at the Surety's; it is completely satisfied. Jesus made a complete atonement for sin by his death; brought in an everlasting righteousness by his life. His sacrifice was accepted; his resurrection proved it, for it was impossible that the grave could detain him a prisoner, seeing the price was paid, and he was thus declared the Son of God with power.

Another reason why Christ suffered these things was in order that he might sympathize with his people under their sufferings. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." "For it became him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Isa. lxiii. 9; Heb. ii. 10–14, 17, 18.)

So far we have seen the reason why there was a necessity for Christ's sufferings, because there was an absolute necessity in the fact that HE ONLY could take the sin-

Digitized by Google

ner's place and render a satisfaction for sin. He could give the price and he could display the power which the work of redemption required to be accomplished. His obedience and his death have become available for the eternal salvation of the whole of God's elect people. We see also a reason why he should suffer from what the prophet has so minutely declared: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Here Jehovah, or rather God the Father, is said to bruise Christ, *to crush him, to pound him*, as in a mortar. The sufferings of Christ are set forth by his being bruised. The allusion is to spices being bruised in a mortar to extract their essence, or to corn being bruised or ground between millstones; the bruising of Christ as in a mortar, to extract his healing virtue, to make him the sinner's health and cure. It was by the determinate will and counsel of God that Christ suffered the just for the unjust, not by permission, but by complacency—a result of God's love to to his church. God, if I might so say, took a pleasure in Christ's sufferings, because by it all his councils were fulfilled, his perfections glorified, his holiness vindicated, his law magnified, his covenant sealed, Satan conquered, sin subdued, and his people righteously and everlastingly saved.

III. We are to consider thirdly and lastly, *Christ's exaltation.*

The question was asked of the two disciples by our Lord himself: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." As if he should say, it was most fitting and proper in itself, it was an inevitable necessity that he should suffer all the condition of life which his incarnation necessarily imposed upon him. Without his being made manifest in the flesh he could not have taken the sins of his people, nor could he without their nature have presented a sacrifice for us. By his taking our nature and our place, "he who knew no sin was made to be sin, for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The prophet Isaiah furnished the apostle Paul with this truth: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." The Hebrew word, as we are told, imports that by the Father's acts of imputation Christ was made guiltiness—

Digitized by Google

that is, all the guiltiness that is in sin, or all the sins of his people, in thought, word, or deed, past, present, and to come, were all transferred to him, and that his soul was made the sin-offering, the ASHAM, or offering for guiltiness in their souls' stead. Christ is therefore made sin by God the Father's will, for Jehovah hath made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all. Christ is treated as the guilty sinner. Sin is charged to his account, and his death is the penalty of it. Having paid the penalty of sin, death can no longer hold him. The glory upon which he immediately enters is—

1. *His resurrection from the dead.* It was impossible he could be holden of it. Justice that once demanded him for its victim now demands his release and waits to do him honour. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Rising from the dead he entered into his glory—the glory of accomplishing salvation, the glory of being victorious over sin, the glory of being victorious over death, the glory of being victorious over the grave, the glory of being victorious over the devil and all the pains of hell. "When he had overcome the sharpness of death he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." By his knowledge shall he justify many. He rose for his people's justification. As the fruit of his life, death, and resurrection, he will demand that the gates of eternal glory shall be lift up that the chosen seed may be admitted to a full participation of those blessings provided for them in covenant. "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Founded on eternal love and union, the glorious covenant of grace is manifested, displaying the unsearchable riches of Christ, the eternal love of the Father, and the irresistibleness of the Spirit's power in bringing the renewed soul into the realization of the blesssings treasured in the person of Christ their covenant head. Thus we see the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. The glorious designs of Jehovah's love, the fulfilment of all his purposes of grace, shall be seen in the establishment of his kingdom. His kingdom must stand; every other must fall; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

2. The glory of Christ arises also from *his ascension.*

Digitized by Google

When he ascended up on high, he entered the heavenly glory, and has sat down at his Father's right hand. That human nature which he took into personal union with himself is now for ever glorified. His manhood is eternal. And because he is the Son of Man, that is, because he has the nature of man, the Father hath committed unto him all power, authority, and judgment over men's affairs both in this life and at the great judgment day. His mediatorial kingdom which he has thus derived by his incarnation, has qualified him to possess and exercise power both in heaven and in earth, and all power hath been given him of God his Father; he hath given all things into his hand; that at his name every knee should bow; for he hath made him both Lord and Christ.

3. God hath glorified his Son Jesus Christ *in his human nature*. The nature of man was not glorified until the ascension of Jesus. As the Son of God in his divine nature only he could not be glorified, for he was equal with the Father in nature, power, and eternity, and, therefore, essentially he could not be otherwise than his Father; but; as that sinless nature which he took, subjected him, for a time, to all the degradation, inconveniencies, and sorrows of earthly life, yet he is now for ever exalted by the right hand of God his Father.

> "Adoring saints around him stand,
> And thrones and powers before him fall;
> The God shines gracious through the man,
> And sheds sweet glories on them all."

4. *Christ is exalted on his throne in heaven,* as is evidenced in the triumph and spread of the truth as it is in him. Wherever the gospel comes, it finds man in bondage to sin, but under the Spirit's invincible power, it frees the soul. Our souls rejoice when we hear of idolatry crumbling, of Hindooism and Buddhism falling and tottering. Wheresoever Christ's gospel comes, it will, wheresoever the Spirit exerts his power, overturn every system that leads man to seek salvation in any other way than that of Christ's death for sin; his blood alone is the sinner's hope.

6. Christ is exalted *in the experience of all believers*. Man though born a rebel, is subdued by the truth as it is in Christ. Wheresoever Christ is received, he is glorified, he is the believers' hope of glory. Christ in their hearts, Christ in their bodies, Christ in their lives, is glorified in them and by them. Christ glorifies them;

Digitized by Google

they have to suffer for him, not for sin, but for his sake.

6. Christ is glorified in all the full manifestation of his own divine wisdom, love, and grace *in the work of his mediation and the redemption of his church.* "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." "He shall be exalted, and be very high." He is exalted far above all principalities and powers in heavenly places. He must reign. He is King of kings, King of saints, Lord of angels, and of the whole universe of creation. Jesus, the God-man, glorified in his manhood, now receives the fruit of all his pains, the recompense and reward of his sufferings,—eternal glory, blessing, and honour from all his saints and all angelic intelligences. The new song of the redeemed will be, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us by thy blood. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Angelic spirits will unite in the grand chorus, saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen."

I cannot, however, leave this great subject without reminding you of some two or three important points by way of conclusion.

1. *We see the glorious dignity of Christ's person.* He is the Son of God incarnate, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father. This doctrine of Christ's godhead is of the greatest importance with respect to our salvation. For if Christ is only the Son of God by virtue of his incarnation, as many do blindly say, then he has a name which has no reality in it, nor is it expressive of his nature at all—he is but a creature at the very best. However great he may be exalted by such persons, they do but depreciate his glorious dignity, and hazard most rashly their salvation in a creature of their own fancy. Unless Jesus is truly the Son of God in his own person, we have no sure foundation for our faith and hope. It would be impossible to confide in him unless we believed that he is "the true God and eternal life." "This is the record that God hath given to us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." He is, therefore, in his own nature and person, self-existent, he

Digitized by Google

is the fountain of life, *originally* in himself, and hence the streams flow to us *meritoriously* and *efficiently*, because *he is* the Son of God.

2. *We see also the glorious dignity of his mediatorial work.* His work is honourable and glorious. "His glory is great in thy salvation." It was the glory and dignity of what Christ is in his own person essentially that made his work so honourable and glorious, "inasmuch as he who builded the house hath more honour than the house." How could an exalted creature—that imaginary thing which some men call the Son of God, have honour and dignity, however great and glorious his work might be, if it were not derived from the glorious dignity of his person? How could Christ's sufferings be meritorious but for the fact that he is the divine and eternal Son of God? If his person is not of infinite worth and dignity, his temporary sufferings could by no possibility procure eternal salvation. Men who assert that Christ in his own person is less in dignity and nature than the essential deity, impugn his work as being not infinite in dignity, nor infinitely worthy, because his sufferings are thereby lessened in value and efficiency; and if that were so, infinite satisfaction for sin has not been rendered, or else sin is not that infinite evil that the word of God has represented. Dear friends, if we once get off the foundation we shall wander into all manner of conceits and heresies derogatory to the doctrine of the person of the Son of God. It is what Christ is in his own divine and glorious personality which has given a divine and infinite satisfaction for sin, it has rendered his obedience infinite and glorious and everlasting, it has given an infinitely glorious character to all his sufferings, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, and his intercession. The safety of the church of God rests wholly upon this foundation, because he is the Son of God.

3. From the two former considerations, we perceive what *an infinite and awful demerit there must be in the nature of sin.* The turpitude of sin can only be seen in the stupendous undertaking by which it has been removed. It is light that manifests darkness. If satisfaction for sin could only be rendered by the divine and eternal Son of God, how awfully great must be the exceeding sinfulness of sin! and we cannot give it a viler name than its own character gives it. Therefore, how useless to look

Digitized by Google

for pardon and peace in anything short of that atonement which has been made by the Son of God in the sacrifice of himself! Dear friends, look to the foundation; the rock of your salvation consists in what Christ *is* as well also as what he has done. Infinite pardon is what you want. An infinite atonement has been made by the infinitely glorious Son of God. If you are looking to anything short of this, neither peace nor salvation will you find in this world. Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Salvation. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, because he is the Son of God.

4. Lastly. What a glorious foundation there is *for all gospel holiness and obedience to the law of Christ!* Since Christ has entered into his glory, having suffered for sins, how can those who are truly united to him, and are manifested to be the children of God by faith in him, live in the practice of any known sin? Impossible! such characters whose lives are not according to godliness do but deceive themselves and others. They give the lie to their profession, and the truth is not in them. The tree is known by its fruit. But if we are in union with Christ, we shall abide in him and walk in him. We shall walk in the light, as he is in the light. The love of Christ constrains us. I commend these things to your prayerful and serious attention; praying that you may receive the truth in the love of it. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."*

* These four concluding paragraphs have been added by the Author since the Sermon was preached, in order to give it more definiteness as to the Person of Christ, and also to give a proper practical bearing.

GADSBY AND ARNOLD, STEAM PRINTERS, CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.

Digitized by Google

THE SON OF GOD
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, May 5th, 1861.

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."—REV. XIX. 16.

THERE is no need to lose our time in arguing that the Person of Christ the Son of God is here intended. In the 11th verse, he is designated the "faithful and true;" in the 13th verse, "His name is called the Word of God;" and in Deuteronomy x. 17 we have a parallel scripture, he is there called Lord of lords—"For Jehovah your God is God of gods and Lord of lords." Similar to this, we find an expression in Daniel's address to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. It is a Hebrew superlative, and denotes the most high God. We rejoice in this truth, because it is a most glorious truth; for let the fumes of scepticism steam up ever so high from the dunghill of Unitarianism, or from any other form of infidelity, or let the foaming waves of rebellion dash against the footsteps of our Immanuel's throne, yet he still sitteth King upon the floods, the Lord reigneth for ever; he not only reigneth King in Jerusalem, but he ever has been, and ever will be, "King of kings and Lord of lords," God over all, for ever blessed.

"Give to the Lord of lords renown,
The King of kings with glory crown."

The chapter from whence our text is taken contains a grand prophetic description of the administration and glory of the Redeemer's Mediatorial kingdom in defiance of all opposition from the rulers of darkness, the spiritual wickedness in high places, or the ungodliness of the men of this world who have set themselves together against the Lord and his Christ. The language is evidently taken from the prophecies of Isaiah, where the Lord is said to be about

Digitized by Google

taking vengeance on the Idumeans, the adversaries of the church, and where the metaphor is employed setting forth Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, as returning from Bozrah triumphantly glorious, having slain his enemies, and having his garments dipped in blood; that prophecy is to be understood of Christ, who alone in his own person, assuming our flesh, did tread the winepress of his Father's wrath, by his sufferings and death for our sakes. Then it was he triumphed over all his enemies and those of the church of God. The glory that is to follow arising out of his victory over death, hell, and sin, is set forth by the words of our text—the name of King of kings and Lord of lords being written on his vesture and on his thigh, and having respect to the destruction of all his adversaries, which he will execute on them in his final coming upon this earth, by the power of his truth and by his Spirit. The blood, therefore, with which his vesture is dipped is not his own, but of his adversaries; not indeed as yet, but in vision as revealed to John, as already done, because of the certainty of the victory. The metaphor of treading the winepress is referred to in the 14th chapter, and the crushing so tremendously terrific, that it is said, "and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, even by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." What an awful punishment is reserved for all rebellious and impenitent sinners, especially those who have persecuted the church of God; blood for blood, overwhelming desolation and destruction without mercy; consummate iniquity and consummate punishment. Even the title itself, the great Captain of our salvation, is sufficiently terrifying to all his adversaries, and the more so as time rolls on, each moment brings it nearer and nearer; the King of kings and Lord of lords, day by day, hour by hour, is advancing on the rear of his enemies, he goes forth conquering and to conquer, for that is his object and purpose. He is the invincible and irresistible conqueror. He is the omnipotent Lord God, faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

We also read, "and on his head were many crowns." (Verse 12.) He on his throne has displayed, within the canopy, over his head the many trophies of his brilliant victories which he has obtained over the rulers of the earth, who through all time have conspired together and set themselves against his government, and also over the

Digitized by Google

principalities, and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places.

But now let us attempt more particularly to consider the words of our text. FIRST, The Person who is here designated the King of kings and Lord of lords. SECOND, The authority under which he is constituted a King of kings and Lord of lords. THIRD, The manner in which he displays his name as King of kings and Lord of lords; and FOURTH, What is comprehended in this super-excellent name by which he is thus known.

FIRST, *The Person who is here designated the King of kings and Lord of lords.*—In the thirteenth verse, it is expressly said, "And his name is called the Word of God." By this expression, we understand from another part of John's writings, that he is one of the three that bear record in heaven: "For there are three that bear record in heaven,—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." This is usually understood, being as plain as words can make it, of the personalities of the divine and glorious Trinity in the unity of the Godhead. The expression, The Word of God, is identically the same in its denomination and signification, as is elsewhere expressed, the Son of God. In Wickliffe's translation, our text is rendered, "His name is called the Son of God." In our modern translation it is rendered, "His name is called the Word of God;" because it is more in accordance with the original Greek and the context. For it is as The Word of God that Jesus is revealed and known amongst men as the way and power of God's truth. His *Person* as the Son of God is that which no man can know or understand, and it is what I understand by the words in the 12th verse: "And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself." That is how he, the Son, subsists essentially. The divine generation of the Son is a doctrine not explained in the Scriptures, though it is plainly revealed. "And no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. xi. 27.) This is more strongly expressed in John v. 26: "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." So that it is plain the Person of Christ is a mystery in itself, yet a mystery that is to be believed and acknowledged; and when by faith in the Person of

Digitized by Google

Christ, the Son of God, we are brought to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, we shall be blessedly led to perceive that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It is not my design to enter into any argument as to the constitution of Christ's Person, or to bring before you the evidence of his true and proper Godhead, but simply to assert and declare his glorious dignity as the Son of God, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father in nature, power, and glory. That he is truly man, as well as truly God, is sufficiently proved by many Scriptures. The union of his complex natures is as great a mystery as is his essential being. It is impossible to comprehend it, but it is the most delightful truth on which the believing soul can rest. The incarnate mystery, God in our nature, is the lifeboat for the sinner when shipwrecked in himself, and all hope of being saved by his own doings is taken away.

In looking upon the Person of Christ in the matter of our salvation, there is everything of encouragement, everything to exalt our hopes and to cause us to rest in him for security and felicity. He is God, truly God; he is man, truly man. He is the God-man Christ Jesus, who by his mediatorial character and offices becomes the medium of divine communication of all those blessings which the Father hath treasured up in him for the enriching and enjoyment of the Church of Christ. Our Lord Jesus in his divine nature is a Spirit, a divine and spiritual being. He is infinite in his being; he is eternal in his being; he is unchangeable in his being; he is infinite in his wisdom, knowledge, and understanding; he is infinite in power; he is infinite in holiness; he is infinite in justice; he is infinite in goodness; he is infinite in truth; the faithful witness and true. Such is the Person of the Son of God, the Word of God, Jesus Christ the Lord from heaven, who was seen by the apostle John in the opened heaven, sitting upon a white horse, whose eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; who was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and out of whose mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword; treading the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and who had on his vesture and on his thigh a name written—KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Digitized by Google

Consider, SECOND, *The authority under which the Son of God is constituted King of kings and Lord of lords.*

To speak of Christ as being constituted with authority, implies inferiority both of nature, dignity, and character; but this respects his Mediatorship, not his Sonship. As the Son of God, he is essentially the same with his Father in all that the divine nature can be; but as the Mediator of the new covenant transactions he is as the Son of man inferior to the Father, as the human nature necessarily must be. In his mediatorial capacity, he is the servant of the Father to do his will; and having taken our nature in order to accomplish the Father's designs of love, grace, and mercy to fallen man, God hath, therefore, highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at his name every knee should bow, and every tongue confess. This name, which is above every name, is that of a KING, which is, as you know, the title given to a man who is the hereditary or constituted supreme head of a nation. The title of a king is the highest style a man can possibly have upon earth, and from that source of power proceed all other titles, dignities, and powers. To be a king, is for a man to have the title, dignity, and authority by which he rules over men. If we speak of Christ as a king, he is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, because he is the Son of God. In himself, as God, he is eternally the great King. Honour and majesty are with him essentially. He could not possibly be otherwise than what he is, the King eternal. As the Son of God, he is to be honoured as the Father, who is the fountain of all honour. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father; therefore, there must be an equality of honour given to the Person of Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

But in speaking of Christ as Mediator, being constituted King by his Father's authority, we at once come into another class of subjects. Jesus as Mediator is King of Zion by the authority of God his Father: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion;" that is, declared and manifested my Son to be King in Zion. Thus constituted, he declares, "By me kings reign and princes decree justice," for he is wisdom essentially in himself and mediatorially to men. Having finished the work which his Father gave him to do, he claims the reward and fruit of all his degradation, sufferings, and

Digitized by Google

death, therefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name. He has sat down on the throne of his Father, he is made both Lord and Christ, and now he must reign until all his enemies are subdued beneath his feet. "The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." (Ps. cx. 1, 2, and 5.) In the 24th Psalm Jesus is there declared to be the King of glory: "Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." The kingdom and government of our Lord, as God-man, must, however, be distinguished from his own government which he possesses in his divine nature and the essence of the Godhead, he being in his own personality as the Son of God, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.* The dominion which our Redeemer has received in his mediatorial character is "over all flesh," "all power in heaven and in earth." His kingdom was the purchase of his blood, "for the suffering of death he was crowned with glory and honour." His throne is also the fruit of his conquest: "He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." He hath ascended on high, led captivity captive. Now raised from the dead, he is set at his Father's right hand in heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; with all things put under his feet, and as the head over all things to his body the church: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endureth throughout all generations. His exaltation to the throne as the God-man Mediator is constituted by the covenant engagement and promise of Jehovah the Father. In the counsels of eternity, when the Son engaged to become the surety of the covenant for his people, he undertook to subdue their enemies, and that when he had completed that work, that *human nature* in which he suffered for that purpose, should be exalted to the throne of universal government

* See this point more enlarged in the author's Sermon No. 27, "The Grand Consummation of the Redeemer's Kingdom."

Digitized by Google

of his redeemed church. This glory he claimed when he said to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (Jno. xvii. 5.)

We come now to consider in the THIRD place, *the manner in which the Son of God displays his name as King of kings and Lord of lords.*

He is set before us as *wearing his title*, the King of kings, in full uniform, wearing his royal robes of state, and exhibiting his full titles and glorious honours. This I regard as a grand display of the eternal majesty of heaven: "Whose going forth is prepared as the morning." The manifestation of himself to his people is well compared to the light of the morning. "And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain." (2 Sam. xxiii. 4.) "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." (Micah v. 2.) "Thy throne is established of old; thou art from everlasting." (Ps. xciii. 2.)

"The Lord Jehovah reigns, and royal state maintains,
His head with awful glories crowned;
Arrayed in robes of light, begirt with sovereign might,
And rays of majesty around."

He is going forth in royal state—on a white horse; this white horse is the same as described in the sixth chapter. *Emblematically* it denotes distinction, dignity, victory, and peace; *prophetically* it denotes the instrumentality of the gospel dispensation from the time of the ascension of Jesus to the throne of his father. The *horse* is renowned for nobleness of figure, swiftness of movement, strength of execution, and fearlessness of opposition and war: such is the nature of gospel truth upon which Jesus Christ does sit as upon a horse to guide and govern according to his divine decrees and infinite wisdom. In righteousness doth he judge and make war. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." The horse being *white* denotes the purity of gospel truths: "every word of God is pure." The gospel sets forth peace through our Lord Jesus Christ; it brings glad tidings of peace. There is no true peace where the white

Digitized by Google

horse of the gospel is unknown; there is no peace, no joy, no victory, no triumph, but where Christ comes on the white horse of his gospel in royal robes of state. He goes forth conquering and to conquer. His object, aim, and purpose is to vanquish his enemies, and vanquish them he will. He is the Lord God Omnipotent, and who shall resist his will? Jesus the captain of our salvation rides forth majestically and triumphantly, crowned with glory and honour, as the Son of man because he is the Son of God; hence his majesty, power, and authority by which he puts down all opposition that the kings of the earth have imagined, and have set themselves at defiance against the Lord and his Christ. "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." Such is the prophetical and spiritual nature of Christ's rule and authority over men's hearts and designs by the omnipotency of his truth as set forth by the symbolical figure of his riding upon a white horse. Victories, triumphs, honours, and majesty belong to him who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

But our text speaks of his vesture. The 13th verse speaks of his vesture being dipped in blood; wet, soaked, plungéd, immersed, baptized in blood; showing the fierceness, the bloody nature of the warfare; "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save;" the King of kings and Lord of lords. Now mark this, believer, for your special comfort. Read with me the 13th to 15th verses of this Revelation xix. "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth out the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Now compare this passage with that

Digitized by Google

of Isaiah lxiii. verses 2 and 3. "Wherefore art thou *red* in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there were none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." Rejoice, believer, that so it was, or there never would have been the armies to have followed on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. By the almightiness of his valour and prowess, he slew all our enemies single handed, his right hand hath gotten him the victory; by the bloodiness of his vesture, we are arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; we have naught to do in this battle, but to follow him, the battle is his, the victory is his, and the glory shall be his;

"Immortal crowns of majesty,
And everlasting songs."

We are next to observe, "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written." His name is written upon his vesture, his name is his title by which he is distinguished and known. By this we are to understand, from the emblem employed, that the name was written, indicated, *on the collar of his toga*, or cloak, the outer garment worn in state, and upon all state occasions; the collar of state cloaks will indicate the honours, titles, and persons of those who wear them; persons who are familiar with seeing state dresses, will easily understand this method of distinction; even our police are distinguished in their rank by their collars; soldiers, and sailors in the navy the same. This distinction makes the person conspicuous, and sets forth his authority, power, and place. Our English nobility have each their cloak, which set forth their rank. Those who have the dignity of certain orders of knighthood, such as the order of St. George, of the Garter, &c., wear a collar that indicates the title and rank of the person who wears it; this title and rank whatever it might be, would, of course, be common to all the persons who belonged to that particular order. The collar is embroidered and interwoven with gold, and whether the precise rank and condition is understood by strangers or not, they would at once perceive it indicated a person of note and eminence; and just let me say, the Roman toga, a large loose flowing garment, was only worn by persons of quality, no mean person was allowed to

Digitized by Google

wear it, because it implied dignity; that of the king or emperor, would undoubtedly be distinguished from all other dignitaries, it would be unique, hence the person of the sovereign would be indicated by the collar of his vesture. Now, apply this ancient custom, for it is very ancient, perhaps as old as Esau's dukes, I say, apply this explanation to the vesture of which our text speaks, how grandly it describes and sets forth the royal dignity of the person of the Son of God, in going forth conquering and to conquer in gospel grace, truth, and power. His vesture denotes *the ground and manifestation* of his dignity and authority. He only wears such a name, and he is known by that name. The Lord is known by the judgment he executeth; on his vesture is inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords, this is the collar of his order, the only one of his order, for he is "THE ONLY POTENTATE," the only wise God. All who follow him know him by his vesture, and the collar which bears his name.

Observe, too, this vesture, though indicating the highest title and dignity, is bloody, stained with blood, dipped in blood, saturated; yes, gloriously bloody; it is with the blood of his enemies, and it intimates that the nature of his government is the source of the complete success of his undertaking, "In righteousness doth he make war," he has *conquered* our mightiest foes, sin, death, hell, and the grave; he has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; these are all vanquished and for ever fallen, to rise no more; their blood has stained all his raiment. But more than this, it is also stained with his own blood, he poured out his own blood, his own heart's blood, he poured it out as a sacrifice for us, he poured it out to God; hence it is the blood of the eternal covenant, the ransom price by which we prisoners were sent out of the pit redeemed captives. O what a price, O what a power, to procure our redemption. O the preciousness of the blood of our Redeemer God, how glorious is he in his apparel. His death was the death of death, his resurrection was his triumph over the grave, and his ascension was the assumption of his authority and power, as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Our text farther states, "and on his thigh a name written." He wears his title on his thigh, that is, his name is also inscribed on a band and worn as a *garter*, above the knee. This is another indication of honour

Digitized by Google

and dignity. This dignity is familiar to us: the Order of the Garter, as it is called, is taken from old customs of princes and kings, to distinguish the wearer. Such a garter, with such a name, has never another, king of kings and lord of lords. Honour and majesty are laid upon him, both upon his vesture and upon his thigh. The person of our Immanuel is dignified above every name that can be named. Hence it is that to this name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord of all. The thigh is also an emblem of power. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, and ride prosperously, because of thine enemies." (Ps. xlv. 3.)

But now let us pause here, and ask ourselves a few important and solemn questions. "Shall I be one of those who shall wear the fine linen, clean and white? Do I expect to ride upon one of those white horses of peace and victory? Have sin, guilt, death, hell, and the grave been conquered for me?" I cannot answer any of these grave questions for any of you; I say to myself:

> "How stands the case my soul with thee;
> For heaven are thy credentials clear?"

O, my friends, it is very easy and pleasant to hear or to talk about these great truths, as set forth to us in such sublime symbolical figures as our text contains; but don't let us be deceiving ourselves in having our ears tickled with glowing thoughts, while the heart has never been broken for sin. Let me ask, are you one of his enemies? Are you in opposition to the "Word of God?"—for that is his name—are you opposed to his truth? Are you opposed to his people? Or are you cherishing sin in your heart, or secretly in any way under a cloak of religion? If so, your case will be hopeless, dying in this state, where God is, you never can come. Hear what his word declares: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." (Ps. ii. 12.)

We will now, in the FOURTH place, inquire, *What is here comprehended in this super-excellent name by which the Son of God is thus known as King of kings, and Lord of lords.*

It is declared of him, Rev. i. 5, "He is the prince of the kings of the earth." "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." (Prov. viii. 15, 16.) Their power, their wisdom and understanding, by which they rule over

Digitized by Google

men, are all derived from him, for he saith, "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength." (v. 14.) "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, the anointed of the God of Jacob, said this under the inspiration of the spirit of the Lord (2 Sam. xxiii. 3), and in the strictest sense it could only apply to the Lord Jesus Christ. The best of kings who have ever lived, have been sinners, and therefore could not be just, ruling in the fear of God, except in the limited sense as regarded by men. At the coronation of George the 4th, a flattering courtier, having the title of bishop, preached from these words, as also the fourth verse, and applied them to his majesty. Surely there never was a viler prostitution of sacred scripture and the preacher's office. May the Lord ever preserve his own sent servants from such awful conduct! Of the Lord Jesus Christ it may well be said, "He is the Prince of the kings of the earth." "And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain."

Yet, though the Son of God is Prince of the kings of the earth, how few there are who own his sway! The general conduct of men declares "We will not have this man to reign over us." "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." What rage they exhibit, what vain things they imagine against the King of kings! But their resistance cannot weaken his power; he will, in spite of all their combined opposition, overturn, overturn, until he, with the brightness of his coming, shall destroy them with the spirit of his mouth. Where is king Pharaoh? where is the great Sennacherib? where is the great Nebuchadnezzar? where is Herod the Great, and the Roman Emperor? those two kings of the earth who gathered themselves together and conspired against the infant Jesus. But he that sat in the heavens did but laugh, and mocked when their fear came. All these kings were under his control, they could only carry out his designs, for the hearts of all kings are in his hand.

God in Christ is King of kings and Governor among

Digitized by Google

the nations. This is most evident from *the preservation of his truth;* what attempts have been made to crush it or to subvert it—scoffers, atheists, secularists, Socinians, Unitarians, refined spiritualists, all combine to oppose the truth as it is in Jesus. Even the attempts to stamp out the evangelic spirit in the Church of England are naught else but heathenish rage against the truth. The names of Cecil and Newton will live when the names of Arnold, Maurice, and Stanley will be forgotten. Their opposition is futile, and will be of no ultimate avail. Truth, the cause of truth, will go on; it will go on onwardly and prosperously, because it is truth; and eventually it will overturn every system and speculation that men devise for placing their hopes of heaven upon any other basis than that which is founded upon the work of God the Holy Ghost. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth;" "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23.)

Christ is King of kings, as is most manifest *in the care and protection by which his people are preserved.* Notwithstanding the fires of persecution, the insidious opposition of pretending professors of religion, and the open haters of God's people, still they live; nothing yet has either stamped out the truth or crushed out the spiritual life of the feeblest lamb of Christ's flock. The enemies of truth and righteousness oppress the true church of God. Papists and furious high church bigots oppress with equal malignancy, for they are both of the same stock and lineage of Antichrist; but the Lord reigneth. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" because the light of divine truth is displayed, and makes manifest their hatred to it, and their hidden deeds of darkness. This their way is their folly. The King of kings shall have them in derision. His throne is for ever and ever. The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre. His enemies shall all be found liars, and he will tread upon their high places; they shall all be clothed with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish. His throne is above every throne. And why? The answer is, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The King of kings and Lord of lords rides prosperously on his white horse of vic-

Digitized by Google

tory, clothed with bloody vesture, because of truth and righteousness. This is the secret of victory. Truth, truth alone can conquer; meekness conquers; righteousness conquers. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty; and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." (Ps. xlv. 3–6.) Jesus the Son of God is King of kings and Lord of lords.

My hearers! If Christ is our righteousness, our truth, our meekness, we shall conquer every enemy, we shall override all opposition; not without. But let me ask you, are you the followers of the Lord Jesus on his white horse? following him as he leads on? espousing the same cause in which he is engaged? These are vital questions, heart-searching questions. Examine yourselves, and ascertain what evidence you have that you are united to Christ by a true and living faith, and that these things of which we are now speaking are the realities on which your souls do live. If so, ride on, keep Christ in view; you will know him by his vesture dipped in blood, his royal robe of state; none like it; no, nor none like him; he only hath such a vesture, he only hath such a name, he only hath accomplished your salvation. He goes forth conquering and to conquer. Every movement, every step is almighty and divine progress; every movement, every step marks the defeat of error, of sin, and of Satan. Even in our own experience we realize it by faith; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed. By keeping Christ in view, by keeping your eye on his blood-stained vesture, you have before you a continual evidence of your complete and eternal salvation; for the blood by which his raiment is stained is the blood of your hellish foes, and you are but following him on to victory and everlasting joy and praise.

Again, Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords in that *he is Lord of all power and might,* over every dominion that can be named, far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. He hath put all things under his feet, and he is the Head over all

Digitized by Google

things to the church, to the glory of God the Father. He is Lord of all, he is over all the enemies of God's eternal truth, he is Lord over all the enemies of his people, he is Lord over sin in all the world, he is Lord over all the effects of sin: "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." By Satan sin came into the world; by sin came death. Death is the last enemy that man has to fear. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; and, until death is destroyed, Jesus must reign. He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; and it is important to observe that, though it is declared that the works of the devil will be destroyed, and that all our enemies will be destroyed, and that all the enemies of God and of his Christ, these will all be destroyed, yet not Satan himself; he will be subdued, and he himself, and all his angels, will be cast into the bottomless pit of eternal damnation, horror, anguish, and pain. For them the pit of hell was prepared. In that pit there will be everlasting misery, everlasting punishment, but *no destruction*. Death itself shall be destroyed, it shall be destroyed *for ever*, and that shall be a ground for rejoicing to God's people; but O, to the wicked, and all who forget God, and who shall be cast into the lake of fire with Satan, that awful fact becomes the ground of their everlasting torment. Death is for ever destroyed. No death to the wicked, no death to their misery, no death to their pains, no death to their damnation. The keys of hell and of death are in the possession of him who is Lord over death, hell, and the grave. All who are there are there by his appointment, are under his dominion, and will be kept everlastingly there by his almighty power. He has conquered the devil, and when time shall be no longer, all flesh shall see the salvation of our God. Hell itself shall tremble at that dread moment, its inhabitants shall then know the wrath of the Lamb to the very uttermost.

If, then, the Son of God is Lord over all, and is manifested to destroy the works of the devil—sin and death, and the effects of sin—then we are sure he is *Lord over sin within*. What a source of comfort this must be to those who lament the power of indwelling sin! it shall not rule in the hearts of his people, it does not rule in the hearts of God's people. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Digitized by Google

Jesus is Lord *over all sinful men.* He will destroy all their projects, all their resistance; he will destroy their works with the brightness of his coming. His sword is upon his thigh; he is ready to execute vengeance upon all who oppose his truth and his people. He rides forth conquering and to conquer; he is sure to conquer, it is his eternal purpose. His goings forth have been of old, from everlasting. Sinner! be afraid.

"The stoutest rebel must resign at his commanding word."

If Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, O what ground for rejoicing has the believer in Jesus. What a solid basis for his happiness, both in this life and the next! If God be for us, who can be against us? If we are united to Christ by a true and living faith, he is for us, nothing can hurt us, for Christ is Lord over sin, Lord over the damning power of sin, Lord over sinful men, Lord over all the effects of sin, being Lord over death, hell, and the grave. Well may we shout, "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

How great is the dignity and privilege of true believers! How we may congratulate each other! The King of kings is our friend. The pleasures and honours of the world are nothing to us; all things are ours. Soon we shall join in the rapturous chorus, "Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." Soon we shall join in the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." He is King of kings and Lord of lords. On his head were many crowns; for we shall crown him "Lord of All." Amen.

Digitized by Google

CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, June 23rd, 1861.

REVISED.

"Christ is All, and in all."—COL. III. 11.

THE epistle to the Colossians appears to have been written by the apostle at the same time as that to the Ephesians, and both sent by messengers, Tychicus and Onesimus. The two epistles should be read together. Each is, as it were, a commentary on the other. This is in two parts—doctrinal and practical. In the two former chapters the apostle exhorts the Colossian churches to constancy in the faith. In this chapter he stirs them up to the more diligent study of heavenly things by forcible arguments (see verses 1 to 4), and then in the verses preceding my text, he further exhorts them to mortify their members in the body, urged in several particulars, and pressed by several arguments (see verses 5 to 10). Amongst other arguments this is one,—the putting off the old man, and putting on the new man (verses 9 and 10), which he particularly describes. This argument, says an old author, is put in two ways—"By removing the false opinion of those who confided in their external privileges, and contemned all such as were without them." National distinctions and prejudices are nothing. Whatever prerogatives, rights, or privileges a man may naturally possess, they are nothing; nor doth it matter what is the external state. None of these differences are looked at or considered, but Christ is All, and in all; not what the man in himself is or was, but what he is now, as a believer in Christ.

The apostle, by propounding the true opinion—which is the other way referred to—that "Christ is All, and in all," shows that all those external things which are accounted so honourable, without this new man avail no-

Digitized by Google

thing to salvation; nor will the want of any of these hinder a person of salvation and acceptance with God, if the great work of regeneration be wrought, for Christ is All, and in all. In fact, the apostle makes the same importance attach to the doctrine of the new creature as Christ himself did with Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again," and at this point we must begin, before we can find Christ to be our All, and in all.

The doctrine of the text is, the Lord Jesus Christ is in all things, and to all persons that have a true saving interest in him, ALL, and in all. It doth not exclude the Father and the Holy Ghost, for the whole Godhead is all in all to believers, as well as Jesus Christ. But because the Lord Jesus Christ is the head of his mystical body, the church, therefore this is principally appropriated to him, to be All in all to all those who are united to him by saving faith; for he is also the head of communication, from the union by which true believers are made one mystical body with Christ. It is from the divine nature in Christ that he is All in all to his people. Faith in Christ removes all national, external, and circumstantial distinctions. All in Christ Jesus are one in state, one in nature, one in character, one in relation, and one in resemblance to Christ, after whose image they are created.

The words of our text are often used as a comprehensive and convenient sentence to express the oneness and fulness of Christ in his person, name, and office, as the great head of authority, influence, and union, in contradistinction to the many sects and parties, differences and divisions, that are found in the visible church. Sometimes Christ is set forth as the All, and in all of the Gospel; its design being to set forth the glory of his person, his mediatorial work, and all those office characters which he bears in relation to the covenant of grace. This is the spiritual meat and drink of the church of God; they live by faith upon the Son of God, and have an experimental proof of the all-sufficiency of Christ for all their needs, hopes, and desires; and thus the words themselves, few, short, and simple as they are, become a concise epitome of all that the believer can express of the person, work, and character of Jesus.

"He's all that's good and great,
All that I can admire,
All that's endearing to my soul,
And all my heart's desire."

Digitized by Google

But now let us endeavour to proceed with the great subject before us. Here is a mighty ocean opening upon our view; to scan its length or breadth is impossible, its infinity bids defiance to our sketch—it passeth knowledge. What Christ is in himself no mortal can understand or comprehend; what Christ is to his church will never be fully known; "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." We can only gather a few pebbles here and there, as we go along the shore, and still feel how poor and insignificant are all human thoughts and words, upon so sublime and magnificent a theme as we now venture to discuss. Christ is All, and in all. The truths contained in these words are more precious than all the gold and precious gems that earth can yield; and in attempting to deliver my thoughts, I will aim to cast them in the following order: 1st, In respect of what Christ *is* in his own Person as declared and revealed in the scriptures of truth. 2nd, In respect of what he is *to* the Church of God in the economy of Redemption. 3rd, In respect of what he is as the spring-head of all the blessings which believers *have in* him; and 4th, In respect of of what is known, felt, and enjoyed *experimentally* in the hearts of believers that Christ is their All, and in all.

I. I am to speak of what Christ is, as being ALL, AND IN ALL, *in respect of what he is in his own Person, as declared and revealed in the scriptures of truth.*

The gospel, in its broadest sense, is a revelation of God the Father in the Person of Christ, by the teachings of the Holy Spirit. He takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the renewed soul. There is no other way of having a true and saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. By no efforts of the human will or intellect can it be acquired; it is a divine revelation made to the soul personally; and the soul is brought experimentally to feel that Christ is all that it can require. To a believer who is living upon Christ, Christ is everything, and Christ is in everything: Christ is in him the hope of glory, his Alpha and his Omega, the first and the last; and being thus brought to know Christ for himself, what Christ is to him, and what he has in Christ; and to be assured of his completeness in Christ, his one desire and aim is to know what Christ is in himself. As the believer grows in grace, so he becomes desirous of growing in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Digitized by Google

(1.) The Scriptures most emphatically declare to us *the Godhead* of the Lord Jesus Christ: "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was God." (Jno. i. 1.) His divinity is also proved from his being the creator of the universe: "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (Jno. i. 3.) Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, speaks of Christ as having "made the worlds," and "upholding all things by the word of his power." (Heb. i. 2, 3.) Many places in Scripture, indeed, plainly assert the real and proper Godhead of Christ by giving him the same distinguishing Names and Titles as are peculiar to the only true God; but for our present purpose one shall suffice. The apostle John, First Epistle, v. 20, says, "We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." The scriptures also describe the Lord Jesus Christ by the true Nature and essential Properties of the only true God. In him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily. The Godhead, that is, the Nature or Essence of God, even all its fulness, its essential perfections, glory, and blessedness. I might speak also of his Person as being essentially a Divine Spirit, and as comprehending Infinity, Eternity, and Unchangeableness; but as this is not a point in dispute, I shall waive bringing forth proofs. Another indication of his true and proper divinity are the numerous miracles he performed when on earth. His works of grace, mercy, and peace all denote his eternal power and Godhead, such as forgiveness of sins and many of those gracious operations wrought in the heart which God only can effect.

(2.) The Scriptures also declare the true and proper *Sonship* of the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father has given most unequivocal testimony to his Son. "And lo! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. iii. 17.) The testimony of John the Baptist is, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He (the Father) hath declared him." (Jno. i. 18.) When Paul began his ministry, it is said, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the Son of God." (Acts ix. 20.) The real knowledge and experimental belief of this truth is made by the apostle John, a fruit and evidence of the soul being

Digitized by Google

born again. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." (1 Jno. iv. 15.) Jesus, in discoursing with Nicodemus, speaking of himself as the Son of Man, states as a reason why believers in him should not perish: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jno. iii. 16.) And in verse 18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." In these few passages of Scripture thus recited we have the *relationship* fully declared. This relationship is one of Nature and not of Office. I am aware this is not admitted by many who profess to admit his Deity as the Word; but all such persons may justly be suspected of cherishing the heresies of Arius and of Sabellius, to a more or less degree. Those who desire to know the truth as it is in Christ, by searching the Scriptures will, under the teachings of the Spirit, plainly perceive that the true and proper Sonship of Christ is divine and eternal, and that the relationship being thus constituted is the only basis on which the church of God rests secure for salvation and eternal life.

(3.) The *Mediatorial* character of the Son of God forms a large portion of Scripture truth. The Person of Christ is complex. He is truly man as well as he is truly God. He became Incarnate that he might become our salvation. "The Word was made flesh." "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh"—"of the seed of Abraham;" "of whom concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Here is a clear attestation both to his true and proper Manhood, and his true and proper Godhead. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the apostle expressly lays it down that the Godhead and Sonship of Christ is the sole foundation of that which fitted him for his Mediatorial work and office, and from whence it derives all its fitness, merit, and dignity. The perfection of his Manhood and the perfection of his Godhead, and the perfection of the personal union of both natures, constitutes him a most glorious Saviour, by whom the church of God is completely saved from all sin, and by which, as our Mediator, we have access unto God the Father. "There is one

Digitized by Google

God, one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. ii. 5.) In him, as our Head, we are eternally blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as we are chosen in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 1, 2.) It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and of his fulness believers are constantly partaking, for his mediatorial capacity becomes a channel of communication of every grace to every mystical member of his body. In the complexity of his Person, Jesus the God-man, there is a sufficiency and a suitableness which ransomed sinners find to meet every want and necessity that their condition on earth has brought upon them. In a word, CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.

II. I come now to speak, in the second place, *in respect of what Christ is to the church of God in the economy of redemption.*

We have laid the foundation of our discourse by stating what Christ is in himself as being All, and in all. Our next business is to build upon this foundation: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Like as from the garden of Eden there ran four great rivers which watered extensive tracts of the surrounding country, so there are from the Person of Christ these four streams of salvation's blessings flowing to every member of the living family of God. The fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Christ is the source from whence we derive all our salvation. It is from his fulness that the saints on earth have every grace on earth and all their blessedness in heaven.

1. He became their Surety in the covenant of grace. Before the fall of Adam their persons were secured in Christ their covenant head. God the Father having loved the church with an everlasting love, irrespective of any condition or circumstances on their part, chose their persons in Christ, gave him to be their head, and in him their persons were made secure. He undertook to redeem his people from the curse of the law by being made a curse for them. In his suretyship engagements he took their nature into personal union with himself, and by becoming incarnate became also their substitute, for he perfectly fulfilled the law which they in Adam had broken. He gave himself a sacrifice for sin, the just for

Digitized by Google

the unjust, that he might bring them nigh to God. His obedience is imputed to them as their righteousness; his sufferings and death is accepted as an atonement to God on their behalf. Here is seen the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. His suretyship was the virtual and actual undertaking of our redemption. He hath redeemed us by his blood. We are made nigh by the blood of Christ. He rose again for our justification; hence all our blessings are secured and ratified to us in him. God the Father's election of us was *in* Christ; the death of Christ is *all* our ransom, both in its price and by his power. We are by his Spirit made new creatures in him, so that from his suretyship flows all our redemption and all our blessedness; the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Christ as our Surety is our All, and in all.

2. The Perfection of his Mediatorship. This is the ground of whatever we are, or have, or can expect as redeemed sinners. The mediatorial capacity of our Lord Jesus Christ is most gloriously constituted by the union of his divine nature with the human. The fulness of his Godhead, and the immaculateness of his Manhood, constitute the perfection of his Mediatorship. His person and his work possess a perfection which gives a meritoriousness to everything by which our salvation is effected and secured. In the fulness of his Godhead there is a fulness of merit; for all the divine perfections centre in him personally as the Son of God, being co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit. By virtue of his perfect manhood, perfect and sinless in its nature, there is a fulness of merit which he possesses as man which belongs only to Christ, the Mediator; and though he was made sin for us, yet "he knew no sin," neither in his nature nor in any action; "he did no sin," neither was guile found in his mouth. By virtue of his merit, the sacrifice of himself made his atonement perfect and complete. By virtue of his merit, the obedience he wrought out in his life, he has thereby brought in an everlasting righteousness, which is to all, and is upon all who are united to him by a true and living faith. Salvation is, therefore, perfect and complete. A full satisfaction has been made for sin. The law of God has been magnified and made honourable.

Digitized by Google

The Father is well pleased with his Son for his righteousness' sake. Justice is satisfied. All the divine perfections harmoniously meet and concur in the salvation of every redeemed sinner. "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The justice and mercy of God go hand in hand to display the grace which is in Christ Jesus. His blood and righteousness is all our hope, all our plea, all our merit. Our only footing on which we expect acceptance with God is upon the ground of his mediatorial work being perfect and complete,—a complete satisfaction for sin by complete atonement; a perfect righteousness by a perfect obedience. All that was essential to make salvation effectual to the end designed in covenant by Jehovah, namely, "to *bring many sons to glory*," is accomplished by the Son of God in his mediatorial capacity. Christ is All, and in all, as the mediator of the new covenant; for his work is perfect, honourable, and glorious.

3. The Bond of Union in the Covenant of Grace. Our Lord Jesus, by various apt and striking similitudes, has presented to our view the divine and eternal union that subsists between his people and himself with his Father. There is a perfect oneness and a relationship that subsists between the Father and the Son. This oneness and relationship is revealed and declared to us by the fact of their mutual love to each other. This is a personal and a relative love. Out of this personal and relative love arises also a covenant union, which relates to all the redeemed family of heaven being loved with an everlasting love by the Father, and their everlasting felicity being secured by covenant union. By this covenant union Jesus is made is made the head of his body, the Church. She is the Lamb's wife; he is the heavenly Bridegroom. The union subsisting betwixt Christ and his Church is perfect and complete. It is divine, eternal, mutual, and indissoluble. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it. He speaks of them as the Father's gift to him from the love he had to him and them, and this union for ever abides; "Them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." He prays for their safe keeping: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which

Digitized by Google

thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." The manifestation of the Father's name by Jesus to his church, is the declaration of this love and relationship, and which is the bond of union in the covenant of grace; and the object of Jesus in thus making known the name of the Father, is that his church shall have an experimental proof of this union. He says, "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." There is something more sublime and glorious in this divine union than any words of mine can represent. The name of the Father is expressive of his nature in that relationship. The relationship of a Father to a Son is love, union, and indissolubleness. The Lord's family, by adopting grace, are all sons—sons of the Lord God Almighty. Made partakers of the divine nature by regenerating grace. They receive the spirit of adoption, and realise their union with Christ and the Father by the Spirit bearing witness in their hearts that they are "the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." This union is, therefore, divine, eternal, and immutable; for Christ is the immutable God, the divine and eternal Son, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The covenant of grace is an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, both as it respects the honour of God and the safety of his church. The bond of this covenant is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Surety of it; the perfection of his Mediatorship is the glory of it, and the joint union of the Father and the Son is the security of it. Thus Christ is ALL and in all to the Church of God in the economy of redemption.

III. I am now to speak, in the third place, of *what Christ is as the Spring Head of all those blessings which the Church of God possesses in him.*

Our text, short as it is, is a compound sentence. It plainly consists of two members, distinct and distinguished from each other. As they stand together in a certain order, they form a *connected* and comprehensive whole, which Christ is, first, *objectively*, to all his people; secondly, *subjectively* in all his people; and thirdly, *both together*, as all things *to* them, and *in* all them. This is how the

Digitized by Google

Holy Ghost has joined the two great truths by combining them in one sentence. It is a golden sentence, the richness and fulness of which can only be seen, known, and felt by those whose mercy and blessedness it is to experience, under the Spirit's teaching, what Christ *is in himself*, what Christ *is to them*, and what *they have in* Christ, being All to them and in all of them. This seems to me clear from the preceding context and connection of the words. The sense, therefore, may be put thus: Christ is All,—the all things to believers; Christ is in all believers; and Christ is all things to them, *and* in all of them, individually and collectively. He is not one of these things merely, but both these together, in their order and connection. Now what God hath thus "joined together, let no man put asunder."

We come now to the point in hand—Christ as the spring head of all those blessings which believers have in him, is their All, and in all. This brings us at once in full front of that precious portion of God's word in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians i. 3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Every spiritual blessing which the gospel reveals as belonging to the church of God, is in Christ as their covenant Head and Mediator. Not in themselves, as individual members, but in Christ alone, federally and mediatorially. He is made the grand storehouse, the spring head and fountain of all grace. This is their glorious security. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; a fulness of blessing, a sufficiency and efficiency. He is the fountain of all new covenant blessings. They flow to us in streams by virtue of his mediatorial office. He is the fountain of all life, grace, mercy, and peace. He is the hand of God by which we receive blessings from the heavenly throne. He is the door by which we enter into a participation and enjoyment of these precious realities contained in the vast fulness, contained in his glorious person, work, and character. The fulness of his godhead is a fulness of merit for us in all that relates to his mediatorial capacity. Whatever we are in him, or have in him, or expect from him, is only on the footing of his merit as God-man, Mediator, Christ Jesus. Without him we can do nothing. Our sufficiency is of God in him. Were we possessors of

Digitized by Google

all things, they would be nothing without him, he is All in all. Everything enjoyed by us is in Christ; the more we live to him, the more we realize it. It is from him alone that any good becomes a blessing; he makes every thing effectual for which it is appointed. No good thing in itself, without his blessing, would be good for us; it would become a curse to us the moment he withdrew himself. He it is that makes all things blessings. He is our All, and in all in the way of blessings, their efficiency and their sufficiency.

Our necessities are such as ever to be requiring a supply of grace from his fulness; and this fulness is inexhaustible. Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. In every time of need, this spring of grace flows most graciously, freely, and fully, to every needy sinking sinner, and here is the blessedness. Jesus the Son of God having taken our nature into union with himself, having dwelt among men, has become, in his own humanity, fully acquainted with every condition of life which his incarnate state on earth necessarily imposed. He is the life of life, the light of light, the spring head of all fountains and streams in the desert. On him, as our Mediator, the Spirit of God was poured without measure. His humanity was perfect, being sinless; his sympathy for his suffering members is perfect, for all that he is as man is perfect. Every gift, every grace, all goodness, wisdom, and power he possesses in rich abundance. The glories of his godhead have enriched his manhood, so that he is to the church of God the sum of all the good it can ever need or hope for. Every blessing is so vested in him that a never-failing fulness exists essentially and mediatorially, being the incarnate Son of God. Christ is All, and in all.

Christ is our all in *spiritual life.* He is life in himself: from him we derive our life; he is the All, and in all of our hope, our knowledge, peace, and joy. He is our life, he is our glory; all we are, all we have, originated in him, is maintained by him, centres in him. "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever." He is the spring of all our spiritual *fruit;* every gift and grace of the Spirit is from him. When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, even for the rebellious that the Lord God might dwell among them. He not only dwells with his people, but in their hearts, "made an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Digitized by Google

He is the spring of *their repentance*. He gives repentance; it is he alone that can turn the heart to God. No true repentance without Christ's gift, and where there is true repentance towards God, there will be true *penitence* for sin—godly sorrow for sin. Sin must be hated on account of its own sinfulness, not simply for the punishment it entails. The fear of God and the fear of wrath must be distinguished, for they are distinct things. One leads to God, the other leads from him. Christ is All, and in all of whatever arises out of true repentance towards God, for he is the spring head of it, he is all and in all. Christ is the spring head of *faith*. Faith in Christ comes from Christ. It is expressly said to be the gift of God. Unbelief is the sin of the world; the poison of all the world is in it. Faith, true belief in God, trusting to Christ alone for life and salvation, whilst feeling the sentence of death and viewing the curse hanging over sin, this is God's work alone. Whoever has a genuine sense of this, has a true and living faith. Its *operation* is also God's work, for it is "God who works both to will and to do of his good pleasure." As unbelief has the poison of all other sins in it, so, on the other hand, wheresoever true faith is found, there are found also the other gifts of the Spirit. Christ is the spring head of every stream of blessing flowing into and filling the heart of every believer united to him by a true and living faith.

Christ is the spring head of all our hope. Our hope is in God; built on the blood and righteousness of Christ. It is the anchor of the soul, and is cast within the veil; the covenant of grace is the sure ground which holds the soul sure and stedfast, in every time of storm and tempest. Jesus the God of hope fills the soul with all joy and peace in believing. Christ in the heart is the hope of glory. The foundation of hope is in the oaths and promises of God, the oaths and promises made to Christ. The stability of the covenant of grace rests upon the immutableness of Jesus Christ; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Christ is All, and in all. He is also the spring head of all our *love*. Love is of God. God is love. When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, it is because we are Christ's; it came from him and leads to him; what comes from Christ, leads to Christ; the soul looking within, questions whether there is any love to Christ, doubts its interest in Christ, brings

Digitized by Google

itself into darkness and misery. But when a rill of love is felt in the soul, it is found to spring up from Christ the fountain head. Love, like faith and hope, cleaves close to Christ; rules and reigns in the heart, prompts to ready and cheerful obedience to all his commands. Its influence is constraining and is paramount in all privileges, exercises, and duties, because Christ is All, and in all.

Christ is All, and in all of those fruits of the Spirit by which the doctrine of God our Saviour is honoured by the walk and conversation of the believer. The Spirit of *holiness* has its spring head in Christ; we are made partakers of his holiness, the washing of regeneration, and by the discipline of his hand (Heb. xii. 10), the fruit of his work for us and in us is holiness, and the end everlasting life. *Humility* is another fruit which springs from Christ; we are to learn of him, for he is meek and lowly of heart. Our humbleness of mind, heart, and conduct in life is derived wholly and solely from Christ; for it is only as we walk in him, converse with him, and live upon him, that we are transformed into his image and likeness. *Patience* has its spring head in Christ, and when the tried and tempted soul is made sick of looking for patience in itself, then it has a sweet experimental proof that patience in tribulation, strength to bear, resignation to his will, are Christ's own gifts; we must look to him, the strong, for strength, for he it is that gives strength for the day. *Joy* is another of the streams of salvation which flow from Christ, the spring head. We "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." If Christ had not died for us, we never should have had any joy in God. *Joy* and *peace*, arising from an assurance of pardon and of interest in Christ, alike flow from the same source. The precious blood of Christ is a fountain of bliss to all his saints. Their salvation flows from it. Their everlasting glory is secured by it. Time fails, memory fails, to enable us to enumerate a thousandth part of the blessings of which Christ is the spring head to his church. He is the centre and circumference of all the blessings which they possess in heaven and upon earth. Christ is All, and in all.

IV. In the fourth place, I have now to say a few things on what Christ is, *in respect of that which is known, felt, and enjoyed experimentally in the hearts of believers as their All, and in all.*

We here enter the garden of Eden. Here stands in the

Digitized by Google

midst, the tree of life, accessible to all believers. The fruits of this tree all may freely eat; no flaming cherubim guards the way; for they whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life have a right to the tree of life. It bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields its fruit every month; its variety and fulness is its pre-eminence. Christ is a tree of life to all his people. From him they derive spiritual and eternal life by virtue of his mediatorial fulness. Their union to him secures an interest in all that he is, in all that he has done, and also the enjoyment of all that he has promised. The fulness and variety of his blessings are just suited to the constant necessities of every sinner feeling his poverty, emptiness, and wretchedness. Christ is All, and in all to the believer, in all the exercises of his affections, his emotions, and his desires. He is All, and in all that is revealed of him in the scriptures of truth. He is All in all the ordinances of God's house. He is All in all the preaching of the gospel. He is All in all the events of providence. He is All in the relations of life. He is All in all those things by which man finds temporal support and comfort. Whatever the believer needs for the enjoyment and improvement of life, Christ is All and in all, whether it be in the way of safety, supply, service, or satisfaction. Christ is his life, his meat and drink. Christ is his comfort, his raiment, dwelling, light, and shade. Christ is his friend, guide, companion, brother, physician, prophet, priest, and king. Christ is the sufficiency and the perfection of his people; they are complete in him personally, their supplies are all complete in him. He is their everlasting portion; for their happiness, both for time and eternity, is bound up in him. Believers who are living daily on Christ's fulness, make him their All, and in all. Whatsoever they do in word or deed, they desire and aim to do it in his name, and as in his sight. If they ask a blessing on their ordinary food, or render thanks for mercies bestowed, it is in his name. In undertaking any important work, or following their daily calling in life, they seek to do it according to his will. In all that concerns their earthly concerns, position, and prospects, they desire to glorify God both in their bodies, souls, and spirits, which are the Lord's. He is their All, and in all.

In the experience which believers have of the love, grace, and goodness of God, Christ has the pre-eminence

Digitized by Google

in all things. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the Way to the Father. By him they have access to the Father at the throne of grace. In him they stand accepted by the Father; in him they stand complete. Complete in his righteousness, completely justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The feeling sense of this justification is peace in the conscience, arising from the assurance of pardon applied by the Spirit: "By faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." This grace of justification in which the believer stands is Christ in him the hope of glory. In proportion as he realizes his justification before God by the blood and obedience of Christ he realizes his hopes of eternal happiness and glorification.

Christ is All, in all the believer's experience of heavenly truth. He is the light of their understanding, as well as he is the life of their souls. All truth in *doctrine* has its origin in him. All truth in the *promises* has its centre in him. All truth in *precepts* have their bond in him. All *invitations* have their end in him. All scripture testify of him; it is the standard and the touchstone of the truth as it is in him. Whatever is known savingly of the truth as it is in Christ is an experimental knowledge, revealed *in* the heart and conscience; a revelation of Christ *in* the soul. (Gal. ii. 15.) Even in common things, we only know things by a kind of revelation or testimony. A child cannot know his A, B, C, until it is revealed or shown to him; so spiritual truth can only be spiritually known by a spiritual revelation. The natural man can neither receive nor know the things of the Spirit of God; but when he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, then Christ becomes his light; truth, as it is in Christ, is revealed to his understanding. His affections are set upon the truth, because they are set upon Christ himself. Paul's knowledge of the gospel was by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (Gal. i. 12.) Truth thus revealed in the believer becomes an experimental knowledge, not a form of sound words laid up in the memory, and stated with precision and appropriateness, but a demonstration of the Spirit and with power; it is a tasting that the Lord is gracious; a hear-

Digitized by Google

ing with the ear, a seeing with the eye, a looking upon, and a handling of the Word of life in the soul; where this is understood, Christ is All, and in all.

Christ is All in all that the believer experiences of spiritual life. The understanding being spiritually enlightened is a proof of spiritual life. There can be no spiritual light without spiritual life, and there can be no spiritual life without Christ. Spiritual life is indicated by a life of faith upon the Son of God. Faith in Christ is a life in Christ and upon Christ: it is maintained by a knowledge of Christ, communion with Christ, and an enjoyment of all those truths that relate to Christ, his person, his work, and his characters, in all that belongs to the covenant of grace. Spiritual revelations of Christ give to the believer spiritual views of truths; by this he obtains his knowledge, and this is his enjoyment of Christ. In this knowledge and this enjoyment consists the life of faith. The thoughts of the heart are employed upon heavenly realities, the soul is led out of self, away from sin, and is separated from the spirit of the world, and is in love only with the beauties discovered in the person of Immanuel. Many believers, it is true, do not appear to realize all that is here marked out as the life of faith; this depends much upon the method of grace which the Holy Ghost employs in bringing a believer to know *himself*, or the spirituality of God's law; the depths of iniquity, a long course of worldly pleasures, or an even course of moral consistency in life, all mark the unregenerated person with peculiar lines or features which, when the sinner is taken in hand, and is brought to know Christ for himself, his life in Christ is more or less vigorous and defined. Allowances must also be made for the various constitutional temperaments of different individuals; but whatever differences there may be in the appearances of grace in some persons, spiritual life in the exercises of faith, love, and hope is essentially the same in all. A man must be brought to renounce himself wholly, before he can experience that Christ is his All, and in all. Sinful self, righteous self, must be laid low in the dust. Christ exalted must be the crown of the sinner's hope, glory, and salvation. Christ is the believer's All through life, and in the article of death, and he will be All in the heavenly glory, he will then be filled with all the fulness of God, for Christ will be All, and in all.

Digitized by Google

Now, in conclusion, let me make a few practical observations. If Christ be our All, and in all, 1. How vain and empty are all things here below without Christ. Everything else is nothing at all. All the world, with its riches, pleasures, and honours, are vanity without Christ.

2. How blessed is the inheritance of those who value Christ as All, and in all. They enjoy all things in Christ; having him, they possess all things, they want for nothing, for he is All to them. If a believer in Christ be ever so poor in this world, he is rich in Christ, for he is a joint heir with Christ. All things are his, Christ is his. On the other hand, how vain and empty are the highest and best of ordinances, unless Christ is seen and enjoyed in them. How insufficient are any of the Gospel doctrines without Christ being known and experienced, is their substance and reality!

3. How worthless are all those duties in which we may be engaged for God, unless Christ is in them. How useless are all head notions, gifts, talents, or knowledge, without Christ as the foundation and All, and in all of the soul.

4. If Christ has been our All, and in all, on this earth, then he will be our All, and in all, in the passage from this world to the next. What he was to us in life, he will be to us in death. At the very last moment of life we shall find him everything to us. As we leave the world, kindred, means of grace will all fade.

5. Christ will be our All, and in all in the heavenly state. The sum of all happiness will be in him, not in the place itself; heaven without his presence would not be heaven. "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee." We shall live eternally on that fulness which is our All, and in all; for ever beholding his glory, for ever singing his praise, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us in his blood, to him be glory for ever and ever, Amen." Christ was our All before time, is our All in time, and will be our All throughout eternity.

6. But oh how terrible must be the death of those who die without Christ! To the believer in Christ, he is all their salvation and all their desire. Stranger to Christ! nominal professor! how is it with you? Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Amen.

Digitized by Google

THE GOOD WILL OF CHRIST TOWARDS HIS PEOPLE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT HEPHZIBAH CHAPEL, MILE END,

On Lord's Day Evening, July 7th, 1861.

REVISED.

"And for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush."—DEUT. XXXIII. 16.

THE words which I have announced for a text have dwelt upon my mind for some time past; indeed, it was the occasion of my taking the subject of the burning bush for this morning's discourse. The observations then made may be considered as introductory to what is now intended to be laid before you. The leading points were —1. That the Bush was symbolic of the church of Christ in the wilderness. 2. That the Fire was symbolic of the trials and afflictions wherewith God exercises his people. 3. That the burning of the bush, yet *Unconsumed*, was symbolic of Christ's presence with his people, and his preserving care over them. The point for us now to notice is, the Presence and Grace of Christ as dwelling with his church in the wilderness. This is the doctrine contained, and what is meant in the words, "The good will of him that dwelt in the bush."

By a reference to the context you will perceive our text is part of the blessing which Moses pronounced upon the tribe of Joseph. It is so peculiarly striking that we shall do well to observe what is here said: "And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof,

Digitized by Google

and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren."

Joseph was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. The purest, most spotless and perfect of all the patriarchal types, and, therefore, the greatest and most illustrious things are said of him as such. The whole history of his sufferings, deliverance, and advancement are well calculated to be symbolical and figurative of the great antitype, Jesus, the Son of God. *Personally*, Joseph is typical on account of his wisdom, meekness, chastity, charity and patience in suffering. *Providentially*, he is typical of his providing against the great famine of seven years, and therein feeding, not only his father and brethren, with their households, but the Egyptians and surrounding nations, in which he wonderfully represented our Lord in his *spiritually* providing for and feeding and saving his Father's brethren, according to the flesh, with all the Gentile nations who should believe on his name.

Then, again, we may consider the *circumstantial* trials and sufferings of Joseph well suited to represent the state of the church of God in their wilderness state of suffering, trials, and deliverances. What has befallen the church of God on earth is like unto what has befallen the great Head of the church in his incarnate state. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. lxiii. 9.) "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was *in all points tempted* (tried) as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. iv. 15.)

Now, this sympathetic love of Christ was declared to Moses in the burning bush; for in Exodus iii. 7, we read, "And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them." What a clear and full proof is here given of our Lord's constant care and attention to the concerns and interests of his church in affliction, distress, and sorrow! He stands to his covenant engagements; he is mindful of his covenant relationship to his saints. In their lowest estate he owns them, and

Digitized by Google

still calls them "My people." His eye is ever upon them, his ear is open to their cry; and when the cry of their sorrows reach his ear, he is ready to display his grace, and has a word of comfort for them. He knows ALL their sorrows, he takes a particular view of each, and, in his own appointed time and way, he will command deliverances for Jacob. He is the God of all comfort, and comforteth us in all our tribulation. Having passed through this vale of tears himself he knows every step of the way: "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Our Lord Jesus Christ, in his human nature, was *a tried man*, a deeply tried man, "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." His trials, sorrows, and griefs "in all points" were of the same kind with ourselves; but his experience of them was peculiar to himself, "being without sin," so that there was a bitterness and a sharpness in his trials far beyond whatever we have known or ever shall know. I was thinking just now of those words, "in all points." How striking, to be sure. In all points of the compass, every part, every degree, Jesus the Son of God, our great High Priest, not only divinely knows, but *experimentally* knows every temptation, care, and sorrow that occurs in the whole circumference of earthly life. All the points of the compass in human suffering he has gone through in his own body, soul, and spirit. 'Tis true, he has passed into the heavens, but he is still with his church in the wilderness. He dwells with them; he is with them in the fire, he is with them in the rivers and in the floods; the fire cannot kindle upon them, nor the floods drown them, because he is present. What though the bush be all on fire, he is there; the bush remains unconsumed. His presence, grace, and power sustain his people in every trial, sharp or long. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all." He dwells in the bush, and his good will is seen in the happy issue of all the afflictions through which his people have to pass. And we know, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

But without further detaining you with these prefatory remarks, let us

I. In the *first* place, say a few words upon the Person of whom it is said, he "dwelt in the bush."

Digitized by Google

By referring to the third chapter of Exodus, second verse, we read, the angel of the LORD appeared unto Moses.

The word LORD, you perceive, is printed in capitals, which, in our translation, always signifies JEHOVAH. Boothroyd translates it thus: "And the angel Jehovah appeared to Moses." The entire passage, as translated by the Rev. Julius Bate, reads thus: "And the angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a palm tree; and he looked, and behold, the palm-tree burnt with fire, and the palm-tree was not consumed. And Moses said, let me turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the tree is not burnt. And Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, and the Aleim called to him out of the midst of the tree, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am." By the word "Aleim," which is there used, the second person of the divine and glorious Trinity is always understood the Son of God, the Person of Jesus Christ, the Lord from heaven, the messenger of the covenant. He manifested himself to Moses in fire, the symbol of his glory, and declared himself to be the God of his father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And when Moses inquired how he should speak of Him that sent him to the people of Israel, God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM; or, as Boothroyd renders it: "I AM because I AM." Bate renders it: "I WILL BE WHAT I HAVE BEEN." The Septuagint reads, "THE BEING." Thus is plainly set forth by these various renderings an agreement in this great truth, THE ETERNITY, SELF-EXISTENCE, and IMMUTABLENESS OF CHRIST, as the ONE TRUE GOD. He who was with the church in the wilderness, the angel which spake to Moses. That spiritual Rock that followed the children of Israel; that spiritual Rock of which they drank, "And that Rock was Christ." This is the testimony of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments. And this is where true believers take their stand. It is true, the protomartyr Stephen, in relating the circumstance of the Lord appearing to Moses, calls him the voice of the Lord; this agrees with what the apostle John has said in his gospel, where Jesus is spoken of as the Word of God, "and the Word was God."

The next thing for us to notice is, the *manner of the appearance*, or manifestation of Jehovah to Moses, in a

Digitized by Google

bush burning with fire.* As the bush, a lowly shrub, or dwarfish tree, signified and symbolised the Church on earth, so it also symbolised *the humanity* of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a type of his taking our nature. The fire was a type of his sufferings in his incarnate state. However dark and distant this allusion might appear to some, yet it is my firm belief that Jehovah intended thereby to manifest to Moses a revelation of Christ the Mediator, who should appear and suffer in our flesh. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Herein it was that God revealed his covenant to Moses. He revealed the glory of Christ's Person, and the glory of his grace. In this glorious manifestation of the Person and grace of Christ to Moses, what humbling and overpowering sense he had of his own insignificance and sinfulness! He was filled with fear, until God again made a further manifestation of his purposes of love towards his people and of his name. It is only in and through the Person of Christ that God deals with and speaks to man. It is only in and through the Person of Christ that we can venture to draw nigh unto God. We look at the fact of Christ revealed to Moses in the manner of a bush burning with fire, yet unconsumed. Here is something he did not at first understand. In his own way and method he approached the sacred precincts, but was forbidden. At length we see him beholding Him who was invisible, having fellowship with Jehovah in the Person of Christ. In the symbol of the bush and the fire, and in the divine communications, he beholds "the grace of the Lord Jesus, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." Here it is we see the love of God in Christ. What gracious designs are revealed; what promises of consolation and support are here given!—everlasting grace, unfailing consolation, immutable promises! What a divine preparation was here given to Moses to go forth to

* The Rev. Julius Bate, in Exod. iii. 2, translates the word "bush"—*palm-tree*. He thinks it is meant of the dwarf palm, which has a fine, large, beautiful head, and which abounded in the wilderness. I confess I rather like this rendering; but as we are accustomed to the word "bush" in our ordinary translation, I shall continue to use the word "bush."

Digitized by Google

his brethren, and proclaim that their deliverance was near! He whose goings forth were of old from everlasting, had seen the sorrows of his people, had heard their groanings, and now declares his good will towards his Church by announcing that he has come down to deliver them. Be his Church sunk ever so low, Christ is never so high but what he will come down to deliver them. He came down to take our nature. In taking our nature, he brought us nigh to God. Here was the good will of Christ. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through him."

II. We are now to inquire, in the *second* place, what is comprehended in the phrase, "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush."

It will be best to interpret scripture by scripture; it is the safest rule we can have—the mind of the Spirit is there. Turn with me to the second chapter of Exodus, 24th and 25th verses: "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them." Four things are here spoken of God—he heard, he remembered, he looked, he had respect. All this is spoken after the manner of men; God's mind and heart is revealed to us in the way of men's own method of understanding each other. By this we are to understand, that the great Jehovah was in every way acquainted with the condition and circumstances of his people; that though they were in a strange land, oppressed, afflicted, and down-trodden, yet all this was but a part of those purposes which Jehovah had designed, in which his grace and salvation should be more gloriously displayed. The afflictions of the Israelites in Egypt were like a dark cloud in the heavens of God's providence, but across the horizon was stretched the rainbow of his covenant, which he had made with their forefathers. Dark and gloomy as was the cloud in itself, yet how gloriously displayed was the brilliant colours of those precious words: "AND GOD HAD RESPECT UNTO THEM." God's respect consisted in this, a loving esteem of their persons, his kindly intentions towards them, a kind regard for them. In the midst of their afflictions and their sorrows, his love, esteem, regard, was still towards them; they were not unnoticed, they

Digitized by Google

still had his favour, his good will. I look upon the words, "and God had respect unto them," to be the same as if it had been said, "and God's good will was still towards them;" his hearing their groaning, looking upon their affliction, knowing their sorrows, all demonstrate that his divine presence was ever with them. Short as the phrase is, and peculiar as it is in itself, for there is not another like it in all the Scriptures, it comprehends all that can be said of the love, favour, grace, and blessing which God has towards his people, and has manifested in the person of Christ his Son.

But now, to be more particular. The good will of him that dwelt in the bush, is the covenant love of God in Christ to all his covenant people. Jehovah's covenant love. The love of the Father, the love of the Son, the love of the Spirit; the three divine persons in the unity of the Godhead, is here displayed to us in redeeming mercy, both in the method of his grace and of his providence. His acts of grace and his dealings in providence are so blended in the circumstances of his people, like as was the fire in the bush, yet the bush unconsumed. First, Here is a gracious acceptance of their persons, they stand before God, accepted in Christ, accepted in the beloved. Second, They are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Third, They are *preserved* in Christ Jesus, and called, being called out of the world and put amongst his people. Fourth, They are justified by the grace which is in Christ Jesus. This is the act of God in their own consciences, the Spirit bears testimony in their hearts that they are freely justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. Fifth, They are preserved to his heavenly kingdom and glory. The work of grace is maintained by the same power and grace by which it was begun. They were appointed to obtain salvation, by virtue of the covenant made with the eternal Three-One Jehovah. Salvation by grace is the good will of Jehovah manifested towards his people in the person and work of Christ. The good will of Christ, personally, is therefore seen, in his voluntarily undertaking the matter of our redemption. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. lxiii. 9.) In the bonds

Digitized by Google

of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, Jesus undertook to be their Surety and Mediator; he took their law-place, and stood in their stead; he suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring them near to God: "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of Christ in him." He put away their sin by the sacrifice of himself, and thereby redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them. Here then was seen the good will of Christ,—he died for them. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends.

The good will of him that dwelt in the bush is also seen in the bestowment of all things that pertain to life and godliness. The good will of God the Father is pre-eminently seen in the free gift of his own dear Son. Christ is this unspeakable gift. And in the possession of this gift we possess all things. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." The good will of Christ is the greatest and best of all blessings. "In his favour is life." "In his presence there is fulness of joy." Without him nothing is good, nothing is holy, nothing is strong. His good will is the source of all blessings, our springs of comfort, hope, love, joy, are all in him. An experimental sense of this good will is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost; every gift and grace of the Holy Ghost wrought in our souls is from his good will, for when he ascended up on high "He gave gifts unto men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them." Manifest tokens of his presence enables us to glory in tribulations; patience in tribulation is a proof of divine power and care; the experience of patience develops and strengthens our hope, and this hope in Christ is grounded in his good will, a sense of his love and favour towards us. Thus all the dispensations of his providence are owned and acknowledged as from his good will towards us; dark, gloomy, rough and crooked, painful and adverse as the path may be in which we are called to walk, yet "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." His thoughts towards us are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give us an expected end; that expected end is the everlasting happiness of all his people. "The ransomed

Digitized by Google

of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." All this, and much more is comprehended in what is to be understood by "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush." Every favour, every blessing, all the good we have had, or can have, or ever hope for, is from him whose love had no beginning, nor ever will have an end. The love of Christ is the greatest and best of all blessings that can be known by man, whether upon earth or in heaven, "in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

III. I proceed now in the *third* place to suggest some reasons why these blessings are called the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

This will necessarily take us back to the historical record, where Moses had a manifestation of Jehovah in the appearance of a bush on fire, and yet the bush unconsumed. Moses was now eighty years old. When in his fortieth year he evidently had an impression he was to be the deliverer of his nation, for "it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel," and in his zeal, but without authority, he interfered in their individual and private strifes. "He supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them." (Acts vii. 25.) But so it was, that his visit, instead of then resulting in their deliverance, ended in his being exiled, both from his people and from his own place. Forty years rolled on, the sighing and the groaning of these people still kept on; Moses himself, as I believe, had neither forgotten the condition of his people, nor had ceased praying for their deliverence, but he is now no longer in a position to use the influence he once had. He is still a man of prayer, it is true, but he is now very poor, he is only a shepherd to his father-in-law. He was once a zealous, impetuous, headstrong man, but he is now very meek, and has an aversion to engage in public duties. He is now far away from his friends and his people, what can he do? Nothing. What is he in society? Nothing. I can imagine he had given up all hope of ever doing any thing of himself for his people. He has brought his flock once more to feed on the shady side of the desert, under Horeb, and what does he see? An alarming sight,—a fire in a bush, likely enough perhaps to destroy all his

Digitized by Google

flock, if it should spread; but no, though the fire continues, yet it is stationary—it does not spread. Wonderful! yet more wonderful still, the bush is not consumed! This was a sight, Moses called it a *great sight*—"I will leave my flock to see this great sight, and see why the bush is not burnt"—not a leaf singed—the bush is as green as ever. This was a mystery which Moses did not understand; he knew the mysteries of Egypt, but not those of God. God has a method of manifesting himself to his people as he does not unto the world. He reveals himself in a way and manner that seems, at first sight, destructive to their present interests and hopes of the future. This marvellous manifestation of Jehovah to Moses we are sure would never be forgotten by him. Here God declares his character, his faithfulness, and his purposes. Moses realised all that God had revealed to him in the bush during the people's forty years' sojourning in the wilderness. The smitten rock furnishing streams in the desert was a wonder, a never-ceasing miracle. The Apostle Paul is inspired to speak of that rock as setting forth the person, character, and blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ, but Moses retains the vivid impressions, and the heavenly teachings he had, by the burning bush being unconsumed, and now, in his declining days, he still prays that "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush" may rest upon the head of Joseph, and why?

1. Because the bush on fire was a type of Christ's human nature and his sufferings, as it was also of the church of God in its low estate. The bush would be symbolical to Moses of humanity, especially if, as some think, the tree was a dwarf palm. Christ incarnate is a wonderful mystery; it is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh. The cherubic mystery revealed as flaming fire doubtless was known to Moses, and now here is a special manifestation to him personally, and it would be by the same Spirit who teaches all his people to profit, received as a spiritual revelation of Christ and his work to the heart, a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ by a symbol that conveyed to the outward senses the reality and force of that stern truth, God out of Christ is a consuming fire, but in Christ full salvation. Christ incarnate is the sinner's hope.

"Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find,

Digitized by Google

The holy just, and sacred three
Are terrors to my mind."

2. To see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This is discovered to the believer in the revelation of the covenant of peace. Here the soul has an assurance from God himself, a testimony sealed home to his conscience, that the whole plan of salvation was entered into and secured before time, before sin had its being. The loving-kindness of God is declared to have been eternal: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." God draws us to himself in the revelation of Jesus Christ. In him he makes known to us "all the good pleasure of his will." In Christ "dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." In the revelation of his covenant we discover his fiery law, by which sin is exhibited in its exceeding sinfulness. Then it is we feel our demerit and our danger. We discover that God will "by no means clear the guilty" without an atonement. We tremble and fear as we approach this holy ground; but see how God reveals to us his covenant in Christ. There is a fire, but it does not consume, for it is God that speaks. He reveals to us how he can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. God's method of mercy, grace, and salvation for poor, lost, perishing sinners, as declared in the gospel, is the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

3. This good will evidently deserves the name, because of the tenderness, the sympathy, and care which the Lord Jesus exhibits towards his people whilst in their state of affliction and sufferings. Christ's preservation and care is evidence of his presence. He is ever with his church in its darkest and lowest state. Let the fires of affliction or persecution be ever so raging, he is with them; he will not leave them; the flame shall not kindle upon them. He dwells with them. No fire shall consume whilst Jesus is near. He says:

"Nor even kindle on thee once,
Though seven times hotter than before;
I'm there, my glory to advance,
And thou, to wonder and adore!"

"Because I live, ye shall live also." Hence, then, his good will is assured to us upon his own life. Many and great have been our trials and sufferings, but the Lord has upheld us, preserved us in the greatest dangers, de-

Digitized by Google

livered us in our most difficult straits, and strengthened us in our utmost weakness. His love and grace, his mercy, wisdom, and power are all engaged on our behalf; "he will preserve us to his heavenly kingdom and glory."

4. What special seasons believers have of Christ's love and goodness in their times of distress, perplexity, sorrow, pains, griefs, and cares. How often the soul has realized sweet manifestations of his presence!—such manifestations as they never can forget—certain seasons when our souls were bowed down because of oppression, and when God appeared and delivered us. What joy, what a sensible experience of God's love, truth, and faithfulness! We cannot forget the time when God removed the burden of sin from the shoulder and took the yoke from off our neck, and destroyed it, because of the anointing. Jacob never forgot God's first manifestation to him in the dream, Joseph in his dream, nor Moses at the burning bush. When we have been kept long toiling and rowing, wind and tide against us, yet strengthened to endure, and at length to reach our point of rest, we have rejoiced in the truth and goodness of the Lord—strength for the day has been given. These instances of his love and good will warm and cheer our hearts; we look back upon them with delight, and consider them all as proofs of his good will, dearer to us than all the blessings which earth can afford. This good will is over and above and beyond them all. We trace it all to the love of God in Christ, and it well deserves the name, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

IV. Consider, in the *fourth* place, how these blessings are realised and participated in by believers.

1. In the renewal of their nature. When God takes the sinner in hand, he gives him a new nature, plants his fear in the heart, makes him a partaker of his holiness, and thereby gives him a spiritual capacity to experience and to enjoy the love, favour, and goodness of the Lord. The sight and sense that he has of himself as a sinner awakens him to a sense of his danger; his distress and fear lead him, under the teaching and leading of the Spirit, to the blood of sprinkling; the blood of atonement applied to his conscience frees him from a sense of his guilt, and fear, and unbelief; he rejoices in God his Saviour, the blood of Jesus becomes most precious to him; he has been brought nigh to God, and he has peace with

Digitized by Google

God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and thereby "good has come unto him."

2. He is brought into fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, and also the Holy Ghost. Each of the divine Persons in the glorious Trinity have taken a part in his salvation. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ dwells in the heart by faith. The soul draws nigh to God by Jesus Christ; the Spirit helps our infirmities; gives us a spirit of grace and supplication. The experience of God's love in the soul is a firm persuasion of his covenant love, having joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Joy is a fruit that never grew upon any tree but the tree of life, and this is Christ himself. All true joy comes from him; the spring of it is in him; in him all fulness dwells; all covenant fulness—fulness of joy, fulness of good. Love is another fruit produced only by the tree of life. Love is of God. God is love. His loving kindness is made known to us in all those blessings which God has set forth in his word of truth. All the good that the church of God can have, know, or want, is from the love and good will of him who dwelt in the bush. The knowledge of this brings the soul nearer to God, humbles it; but it finds sweet fellowship with God the Father, his Son, and the Spirit. The soul has a believing view of what has been undertaken to rescue it from the damning power of sin, and every faculty is drawn out in holy gratitude, adoration, and praise. Holy fellowship with the Father, Son, and Spirit is that blessed communion which the believer has in meditating, surveying, and realising personal and distinct communications with the divine persons of the glorious and blessed Trinity. The soul grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it also finds his good will to be the best and greatest blessing that God can give.

3. The good will of Christ is realized by believers in those various characters he bears in his mediatorial capacity. How blessed to feel deliverance from those terrors of the law which bound the soul in the prison of death; to feel that the deliverance was gained by Christ its Surety—the ransom price being his precious blood! How precious to find him my friend and my advocate in the court of divine justice! He is my Brother, born for ad-

Digitized by Google

versity; my Shepherd, my Husband, my Lord, my Intercessor, my Prophet, my Priest, and my King. He is my wisdom, my righteousness, my sanctification, and my redemption. He is All, and in all. By faith I live upon him. By faith I walk with him. By faith in him, I realise and enjoy his peace, power, presence, and blessing in all I have and all I am. By faith I realize my union to him, and feel his good will towards me is based on his sovereign, electing love. This is the ground of my safety, the ground of my peace, and the ground of my hopes of eternal happiness.

4. The good will of Christ is realised also by believers in the various means of grace and gospel ordinances. The word of God, how precious to us when the Spirit of truth lights up the sacred page! What heavenly beams of light shine in upon the soul! In his light we see light. What comfort and joy enters the soul as the Person of Christ is there revealed! What blessedness there is in the worship of his holy name! How often has one's heart been warmed in taking his name upon our lips in praise; what life and power often in the ministry of the word; what sweetness and unction when the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to the soul! What pleasure and comfort have we found in meeting with the people of God! What love, unity, and fellowship with them in the things of God! What precious comfort in the pouring out of the heart before God in prayer, and in receiving gracious answers of peace.

5. The good will of Christ is also realized by his sending the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to abide with us. The Spirit dwelleth in us—makes our bodies his temples. It is a solemn thought, nevertheless a blessed one. We are conscious of much evil and sin within, and we are often shocked at the sight, and can hardly think that so holy a Being is there; yet it must be true. It is light that manifests darkness; it is purity that manifests sinfulness; it is life that distinguishes deadness; it is power that rises above weakness. Every grace of the Spirit is a proof of Christ's good will. Faith, love, hope, joy, peace, patience, meekness, and whatever else is manifested in us or experienced by us is the divine work in the soul, by the power, influences, and presence of God the Holy Ghost. He has taken possession of the soul. He has begun the work, and he will maintain it. He will complete it, and bring

Digitized by Google

forth the topstone, shouting, Grace, grace unto it. The soul thus under the Spirit's influence and teaching, is separated from the world in its spirit, pursuits, pleasures, maxims, and tendencies. Nothing but Jesus it esteems and counts all pleasures and riches of the world but as dung and dross, so that it may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on its own righteousness, but that which is by the faith of Christ, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

If these are some of the things which we designate the good will of Christ, and which arise out of his good will, what encouragements we have, if we are united to him by faith, to seek and to dwell more upon the things of Christ! "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." The best of us are living too low. We have need to seek higher manifestations of God's love and grace; to look beyond what we have yet known and experienced. The sense of our unworthiness is no bar to his communication, though it may be to our enjoyment. He knows all our faults, miseries, and weaknesses; as for our iniquities, he will purge them away. What if the manifestation of his love and grace be in the fire of affliction, the fire shall not consume us. God is faithful to his promises, to his Son and to his saints. Your trials are for your good, your profit. They may be sharp, but they must be short. God suffers you to be tried that you may try him; try him for his love, trust him for his grace. He is calling to you out of the bush, draw near to him. Fear not, the place where thou standest is holy ground. He will make gracious communications to you, and you shall prove, to your everlasting good and his glory, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.

Is there an unbeliever or scoffer present in this assembly? Is there a carnal professor here—one who has a name to live, but is dead—dead to God, dead in himself. You have never yet prayed for this best of blessings, the good will of him that dwelt in the bush; you have had no experience of it. Miserable creature! what dangerous ground you are treading on; it is crumbling away from under your feet. Oh that God may give you grace to seek him while he is to be found, and to call upon him while he is near! Amen.

GADSBY AND ARNOLD, PRINTERS, CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.

Digitized by Google

C. GORDELIER'S WORKS.

I.

In one handsome volume, 12mo, 414 pp., extra cloth, gilt lettered, published at 5s. The author having but 50 of these bound copies on hand, wishes to dispose of them at a *reduced* price, 3s. 6d., post free 3d. extra.

THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS.

Twenty-four Sermons on the following Subjects:—

1.—God's Children fed by their Father's Hand.
2.—The Believer's Mouth Closed by Sin.
3.—The Nest Destroyed, but the Bird Saved.
4.—Samson's History a Warning to Backsliders.
5.—Jehovah's Throne the Believer's Sanctuary.
6.—The Ministration of the Holy Spirit.
7.—David Greatly Distressed, but Divinely Encouraged.
8.—The Divine Relationship of Christ to the Church of God.
9.—The Knowledge of Jesus Christ a Divine Revelation.
10.—Christ's Life the Fountain of the Believer's Life.
11.—The Substitutionary Work of the Son of God.
12.—The Believer's Delight in God's Law.
13.—The Divine and Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ.
14.—The Unsearchable Riches of Christ: I. His Person.
15.—Do. do. II. His Riches.
16.—Do. do. III. Their Unsearchableness.
17.—Jesus more Precious than the Golden Wedge of Ophir.
18.—The Kingdom of Heaven Entered in much Tribulation.
19.—Finding the Pearl of Great Price.
20.—The Believer's Conflict with Indwelling Sin.
21.—The Appeal of Zelophehad's five Daughters.
22.—Jehovah's Power Concealed in his Hand.
23.—The Divine Engraving of Seven Eyes on One Stone.
24.—The Truth as it is in Jesus.

Tract: Grace Triumphant; a Narrative of a remarkable and timely Visit to an Elderly Female in a state of deep despair, and near death.

II.

SELECT SERMONS.

12mo cloth, 240 pp., 1s. 9d., published at 2s. 6d., post free. Containing Thirteen Sermons selected from the above Work, and the Tract, "Grace Triumphant." The Sermons, viz., Nos. 5 to 16, and 24. A few copies only on hand.

III.

THE DIVINE AND ETERNAL SONSHIP OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST ASSERTED AND DEFENDED.

A Sermon, 12mo, 28 pp., stitched in wrapper. Third Edition price 3d., by post 4d.; two copies, post free, 6d.

N.B.—This Sermon contains a refutation of the three Semi-Arian forms of error held by many of the professed Ministers of Truth in the Baptist Denomination.

Digitized by Google

IV.

In one handsome volume, uniform with "The Truth as it is in Jesus," 286 pp., extra cloth, gilt lettered, 2s. 6d.; with author's photograph, and "Remembrances," 3s.; post free, 3d. extra.

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

Being Twelve Sermons, chiefly on the True and Essential Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in Relation to his Mediatorial Work, and the varied Experiences of the Tried and Exercised Children of God.

25.—The Divine Object for which the Tongue of the Learned was given to Jesus Christ.
26.—The Reality of the Lord's Human Nature Verified by the various Facts and Circumstances of His Life on Earth.
27.—The Grand Consummation of the Mediatorial Kingdom.
28.—The Cherubim of Glory Overshadowing the Mercy Seat.
29.—The Resurrection Glories of the Redeemer.
30.—The Manhood of Jesus in Heaven Eternal.
31.—Christ with his People in the Waters and in the Fire.
32.—Christ's Gift of Eternal Glory to His People.
33.—The Sufferings of Christ and the Glory that Followed.
34.—The Son of God King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.
35.—Christ is All, and in All.
36.—The Goodwill of Him that Dwelt in the Bush.

These Sermons may be had also in four separate Parts. Part I., price 8d.; Parts II., III., and IV., 6d. each. Any two Parts sent post-free.

V.

THE HEAVENLY STATE & THE EVERLASTING HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

THE ANGELS OF GOD: THEIR MINISTRATION TO THE CHURCH ON EARTH.

Two Discourses, 8vo, 32 pp., stitched in a neat printed wrapper. Price 4d., post free 5d. A few copies only on hand.

"We have *never* read anything *better* on these subjects, and *seldom* anything *so good*."—*Gilead.*

VI.

REMEMBRANCES OF SOME THINGS IN THE HISTORY & CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR DURING THE LAST FORTY YEARS.

An Address delivered at the Baptist Chapel, Farnham, Surrey.

12mo, 36 pp., price 3d., post free 4d. 2 Copies post free 6d.

Publications I., II., and V., can be had of the author only, at his residence, 49, Stepney Green, London, E. Nos. III., IV., and VI., may be had also of the publisher, J. Gadsby, George Yard, Bouverie Street, E.C. Postage stamps received in payment for any of the above works on sale.

Photographs of the author may be had, 1s. each, post free; copies 7d., post free, of J. Gadsby, or of the author.

Digitized by Google

OPINIONS of the PRESS.

"Sound in doctrine, deeply experimental, and eminently practical, these are such sermons as will suit poor, broken-hearted sinners who are under the teaching of the Spirit of Truth. We heartily commend them to the Church of God, and sincerely trust, for the sake of the precious truths which they contain, that they may have that extensive circulation which they well deserve."—*Gilead.*

"Inasmuch as there is a time coming—yea, is even now come—when the Lord is fulfilling his word, 'I will send them famine, not a famine of bread or thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord,' sermons by men of truth and deep in experience, having Christ for their object and subject, will be increasingly estimated by the people of God. We commend these sermons to the attention of our readers. They are full of thought, and fraught with much teaching. They will be read with profit by those laid aside by sickness or infirmity, and are well calculated to supply the place of a living minister in small towns and villages."—*Gospel Magazine.*

"I have read your sermons with the greatest pleasure. I find them very precious. It is rare to find thoughts so deep and clear combined with such liveliness and unction." — *The Rev. P. Maclaren, of the Presbyterian Church, Brighton, to the Author.*

"There is much in them that is new, and much truly edifying, convincing and confirming."—*Christian's Monthly News.*

"This work, complete and beautifully bound in cloth, does credit to author, printer, and binder. Here are twenty-four sound experimental sermons and a tract, 'Grace Triumphant,' a marvellous narrative of God's gracious dealings with a sorely-tried vessel of mercy. The sermon called 'The Nest Destroyed, but the Bird Saved,' is a cabinet of rich Gospel jewels. It is a masterly exhibition of the method the Lord takes in weaning his people from self, sin, and pride. The discourse on the 'Divine and Eternal Sonship of Christ' is truthful, well argued out, and is second to none upon the 'Sonship Controversy.'"—*Christian Dial.*

"We have always enjoyed what we have read from Mr. Gorde-lier's pen. There is about those of his writings we have seen a doctrinal soundness without dryness; an experimental exposition without obscurity; and a practical lesson without legality which is truly refreshing. In the parts now under our notice, we must especially mention two sermons; one, 'The Cherubim of Glory overshadowing the Mercy Seat and beholding the Propitiatory' (in part ii.); and the other, 'Christ with His people in the Waters and in the Fire' (in part iii.); the latter is most experimental, and a style of sermon which will be thoroughly enjoyed by most in the school of Christ; the former enters fully into the subject of the cherubim—what they were and what they typified, adopting a view somewhat similar to that set forth so elaborately in Rev. J. Parkhurst's invaluable Hebrew Lexicon."—*Gilead*, for May, 1869.

Digitized by Google

The following are out of print :—

1.—Scripture Mottoes.
2.—The Sayings of Jesus.
3.—The Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry.
4.—The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation.
5.—On Quenching the Spirit.
6.—On the Death of the Prince Consort.
7.—The Great Plague of the Heart.

The separate editions of the "Nest Destroyed, but the Bird Saved," and also the Tract, "Grace Triumphant," are now out of print; they are included in the volume, "The Truth as it is in Jesus."

NOTICE.

C. GORDELIER contemplates issuing by *subscription* the following Sermons. They will be published in three parts and will form a small volume, similar to "The Mystery of Godliness." These two small volumes will form a book of the same size as the one entitled "The Truth as it is in Jesus," and with that will comprise in a uniform edition, Fifty Sermons, being all that the author intends publishing in the way of Sermons.

The subjects proposed will be

PART I.

ON THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

37.—The Believer Renewed in the Spirit of his Mind.
38.—The Life of Grace Maintained.
39.—The Things of Christ Revealed to the Soul.
40.—The Spirit of Adoption Witnessed to the Heart.

PART II.

41.—Joseph Laid in Irons and Tried by the Word of the Lord.
42.—The Father Chastening his Sons for their Profit.
43.—The Affliction of the Body the Life of the Spirit.

PART III.

Containing Reprints of Sermons not included in any of the former series.

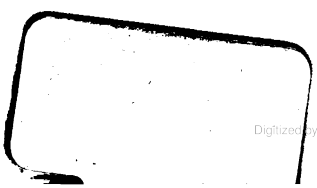
44.—The Great Plague of the Heart.
45.—The Great Physician, JEHOVAH-ROPHI.
46.—The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation.
47.—On Quenching the Spirit.
48.—God's Voice from Windsor Castle.
49.—The Nature and Administration of Angels.
50.—The Everlasting Happiness of the Righteous.

This publication will be commenced on the condition of a sufficient number of names received as purchasers. The Price is expected to be about 2s. Those persons who desire to have the Book, will please send their orders to the Author, at his residence, 49, Stepney Green, London, E. Payment for the Work will not be required until the Work is actually in hand.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google